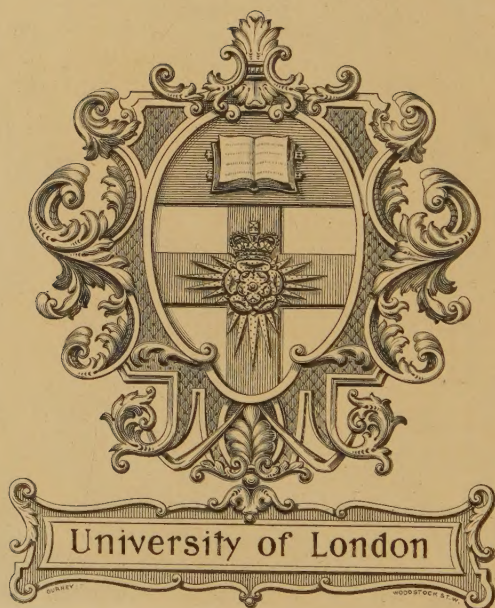


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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

SIXTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

5 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXLVII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF MAY
TO THE TWENTY-THIRD DAY OF JUNE, 1905.

SEVENTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

1905.

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CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) ; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) ; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) ; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) ; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company [H.L.].

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<i>May 29.]</i>		
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ADVERTISEMENTS REGULATION BILL [H.L.].—Petition for Amendment of; of St. Marylebone Corporation; read, and ordered to lie on the Table		3
INTOXICATING LIQUORS (HOURS OF CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].—Petitions in favour of; of Ark of Safety Lodge of Good Templars; Never die Lodge of Good Templars; Bristol Band of Hope Union; Bristol Temperance Federation; Barnsley Christian Endeavour Union; Folkestone Women's Temperance Society (2); United Kingdom Alliance; Victoria Bar Methodist Church (2); London Sons of Temperance; London Cadets of Temperance; Aldershot Women's Total Abstinence Association; Leicestershire Temperance Union; Emmanuel Tent of Rechabites; Greenland Street Sunday School; Wesleyan Methodist Conference; Wesleyan Methodist Church Synod; George Bird Lodge of Good Templars; Nil Desperandum Lodge of Good Templars; Islington Wesleyan Bible Class; Ashton-under-Lyne Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Society; Oxford Diocesan Church of England Temperance Society; Camberwell Girls' Friendly Society; National United Temperance Council; London United Temperance Council; Erdington Pleasant Sunday Services Association; Yardley Congregational Chapel; British Temperance League; National British Women's Temperance Association; Evesham Wesleyan Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Society; Gwyther Lodge of Good Templars; Kent Band of Hope Union; Educational and Mission Sections of Church of England Temperance Society; Wesleyan Reform Temperance League; Pembroke Sunday Guild; Hope of New Trindon Lodge Good Templars; Crescent Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Meeting; Howard		

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Street Band of Hope and Temperance Society ; Sunderland United Temperance Society ; Crossfield Tent of Rechabites ; Lancashire and Northern Counties Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Societies ; Star Tent of Rechabites ; Rescue Tent of Rechabites ; Shrewsbury Circuit Sunday School Union ; Shrewsbury District Sunday School Union ; Friend Lodge of Good Templars ; Daventry Wesleyan Society ; Berkshire Lodge of Good Templars ; Penrith Branch of Church of England Temperance Society ; Silvery Streamlet Lodge of Good Templars ; James Rewcastle Lodge of Good Templars ; St. Matthews' Christian Endeavour Society ; Nelson Welcome Lodge of Good Templars ; Public Meetings at Sheerness-on-Sea, Liverpool (3), Ledbury, Walworth, St. Leonards, Wigan, Charlesworth, Manchester, Royal Victoria Theatre ; and persons signing (8). Read, and ordered to lie on the Table

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS : ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3383. France (Nice).

No. 3384. Venezuela (Caracas) 5

ARMY (SPECIAL PENSIONS).—Return for the year ended March 31st, 1905, of pensions specially granted under Articles 730, 1173A, and 1207 of the Army Pay Warrant 5

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Report of Messrs. F. H. Dale and A. Stephens, His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Board of Education, on intermediate education in Ireland.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 5

GAS AND WATER WORKS FACILITIES ACT, 1870.—Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the consents of the South Hayling Parish Council and the North Hayling Parish Meeting in the case of the Hayling Island Gas Provisional Order. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 5

Intoxicating Liquors (Hours of Closing) Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING.]—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 5

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d."—(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*.)

The Earl of Wemyss 13

Amendment moved—

"To leave out the word 'now' and add at the end of the Motion the words, 'this day three months.'"—(*The Earl of Wemyss*.)

The Lord Bishop of Chichester 17

Lord Belper 19

The Lord Bishop of London 23

Earl Spencer 24

The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) 25

The Marquess of Northampton 27

On Question, "Whether the word 'now' shall stand part of the Motion,"
their Lordships divided :—Contents, 60 ; Not-Contents, 66.

Bill to be read 2^a this day three months.

LOTTERIES IN BRISTOL.

<i>The Lord Bishop of Bristol</i>	31
<i>The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Duke of Marlborough)</i>	39
<i>Lord Davey</i>	43
<i>Earl Spencer</i>	44
<i>The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Lansdowne)</i>	44

LIFE SAVING APPARATUS ON BRITISH SHIPS.

<i>Lord Muskerry</i>	45
<i>The Duke of Marlborough</i>	49

Workmen's Compensation Bill [H.L.]—[THIRD READING.]—Order of the
Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^a."—(*Lord Davey*.)

In Question, Bill read 3^a.

<i>Lord Davey</i>	53
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Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, pages 3 and 4, to leave out the whole clause and to insert, 'Section 4 of the principal Act (which relates to sub-contracting) shall be repealed, and in lieu thereof the following section shall be substituted :—(1) Where any person, being an undertaker within the meaning of this Act (in this section referred to as the principal) contracts with any person (in this section referred to as the contractor) for the execution by or under the contractor of any work, and the principal would, if such work were executed by workmen immediately employed by him, be liable to pay compensation under this Act to those workmen in respect of any accident arising out of and in the course of their employment, the principal shall be liable to pay to any workman employed by the contractor in the execution of the work any compensation which he would have been liable to pay if the workman had been immediately employed by him ; and where proceedings are taken against the principal, then in the application of this Act references to the principal shall be substituted for references to the employer, except in the provisions relating to the amount of compensation. Provided that the principal shall be entitled to be indemnified by the person by whom the workman was immediately employed and by any intermediate contractor, and any intermediate contractor called on to indemnify the principal shall be entitled to be indemnified by the person by whom the workman was immediately employed, and by any contractor intermediate between him and that person, and so on, and any such indemnity shall, in accordance with rules of Court, be enforceable in a County Court. (2) Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing a workman recovering compensation under this Act from the contractor instead of the principal,

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if the contractor is an undertaker within the meaning of this Act. (3) This section shall not apply to any contract with any person for the execution by or under the contractor of any work which is merely ancillary or incidental to and is no part of or process in the trade or business carried on by the principal, not shall it apply in any case where the accident occurred elsewhere than on, or in, or about the premises, work, or building in respect of which the principal is the undertaker 'within the meaning of this Act.' ”—(*Lord Davey.*)

Lord Belper 51

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of Wemyss 54

Moved, “That the Bill do now pass.”—(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and Bill sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at five minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 29TH MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILL [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Darren Gold Mining Company Bill [Lords]; Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords]; Leven's Patent Bill [Lords]; Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Tees Valley Water Board Bill [Lords]; Weaver Navigation Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 55

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 56

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PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Order (No. 16) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 56

Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill.—Lords Amendment considered, and agreed to 56

South Metropolitan Gas Bill.—Lords Amendment considered, and agreed to. 56

Bolton Corporation Bill.—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time. 56

North Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill.—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time 56

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed 56

Gamble's Divorce Bill [LORDS].—Ordered, That Standing Orders 204 and 235 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read a second time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Bill, accordingly, read a second time, and committed] 56

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 57

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill.—Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 57

Gamble's Divorce Bill [LORDS].

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House Copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with the Documents deposited in the case, of Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords].—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*)

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords]; and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*) 57

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill.—Second Reading deferred from Friday till Friday, 9th June 57

London County Council (General Powers) Bill.—Clacton Improvement [Lords]. Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments ; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 57

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MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill; Great Berkhamstead Gas Bill; without Amendment.

Amendments to—Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, “An Act to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts.” [Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 2) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act for incorporating and conferring powers upon a Joint Committee of the Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies; for leasing certain railways of the Metropolitan Company; for confirming an agreement between the two companies in relation thereto; and for other purposes.” [Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to authorise the Portsmouth Street Tramways Company to construct additional Tramways in the urban district of Gosport and Alverstoke, and street works in that district and in the urban district of Fareham, in the county of Southampton; and for other purposes.” [Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to extend the time limited for the completion of the tramways, light railways, and works authorised to be constructed by the Hastings Tramways Company and to revive the powers for the compulsory purchase of land by that Company, and to authorise the construction of certain deviations of their authorised light railways and other works; and for other purposes.” [Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to extend the time for taking lands for the construction of certain tramways, widenings, and works authorised by the South Lancashire Tramways Acts, 1900 and 1901; to abandon certain tramways authorised by the Act of 1900; and for other purposes.” [South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to authorise the Great Central Railway Company to establish a Pension Fund and guarantee pensions for the benefit of their salaried officers and clerks; to alter, modify, and repeal certain provisions of the Acts relating to the Railway Clearing System Superannuation Fund Corporation; and for other purposes.” [Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [Lords.] 57

Gamble's Divorce Bill [LORDS].—That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords], as desired by this House, with a request that the same may be returned 59

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [LORDS].—Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords]; Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills. 59

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Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 2) Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 230]

Metropolitan Pneumatic Despatch Bill.—Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (No. 2) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Rochdale; and Hartlepool; to lie upon the Table

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.—Petition from Barton Hill, in favour; to lie upon the Table

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.—Petition from Newport (Mon.), for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table

PUBLIC TRUSTEE AND EXECUTOR BILL.—Petition of the Royal Exchange Assurance Corporation, against; to lie upon the Table

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.—Petition from Greenock, in favour; to lie upon the Table

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.—Petition from Newbury, in favour; to lie upon the Table

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.—Petition from Rochdale, for alteration; to lie upon the Table

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Report of Messrs. F. H. Dale and T. A. Stephens, His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Board of Education, on Intermediate Education in Ireland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table

GAS AND WATER WORKS FACILITIES ACT, 1870.—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the consents of the South Hayling Parish Council and the North Hayling Parish Meeting in the case of the Hayling Island Gas Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 177.]

RAILWAYS (CERTIFICATES) (EWELL AND LONG GROVE RAILWAY).—Copy presented, of Draft Certificate of the Board of Trade authorising the construction of a Railway from Ewell to Long Grove [by Act]; to lie upon the Table

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address May 25th; *Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 178.]

INCOME-TAX ASSESSMENTS.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered May 18th; *Sir George Bartley*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 179.]

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ARMY (SPECIAL PENSIONS).—Copy presented, of Return for the year ended March 31st, 1905, of Pensions specially granted under Articles 730, 1173A, and 1207 of the Army Pay Warrant [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	60
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Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment (No. 2) Bill.—"To amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886," presented by Mr. Lamont; supported by Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Buchanan, and Mr. Cathcart Wason; to be read a second time upon Thursday, July 6th, and to be printed. [Bill 231] 100

Acquisition of Land Bill.—"To provide for the Acquisition of Land by local authorities," presented by Mr. Atherley-Jones; supported by Mr. Moss, Mr. John Burns, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Slack, and Mr. Fenwick; to be read a second time upon Thursday, July 6th, and to be printed. [Bill 232] .. 100

Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.), in the Chair.]

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<i>Mr. Johnson (Gateshead)</i>	107

New clause (Reduction of Coal Duty)—(*Mr. Joseph Walton*) brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the clause be read a second time.”

<i>Mr. Houston (Liverpool, West Toxteth)</i>	110
<i>Mr. Parrott (Yorkshire, W.R., Normanton)</i>	112
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<i>Mr. William Abraham (Glamorganshire, Rhondda)</i>	147
<i>Mr. Charles Wilson (Hull, W.)</i>	148

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 167 ; Noes, 200. (Division List No. 183.)

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

South Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways Bill [LORDS]
(BY ORDER).—[SECOND READING].—Order for the Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

<i>Captain Norton (Newington, W.)</i>	153
<i>Dr. Shipman (Northampton)</i>	154

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day six months.’”—(*Captain Norton.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

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<i>Sir W. Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford)</i>	155
<i>Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs)</i>	156
<i>Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham)</i>	158

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 105 ; Noes, 92. (Division List No. 184.)

Main Question put and agreed to. Bill read a second time and committed.

Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

<i>Mr. Robson (South Shields)</i>	159
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New clause (Repeal of duty on stripped tobacco)—(*Mr. Robson*) brought up and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the clause be read a second time.”

<i>Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange)</i>	170
<i>Mr. Austen Chamberlain</i>	172
<i>Mr. Helme (Lancashire, Lancaster)</i>	180
<i>Mr. Ritchie (Croydon)</i>	180
<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.)</i>	180
<i>Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth)</i>	182
<i>Mr. Austen Chamberlain</i>	184

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 109 ; Noes, 137. (Division List No. 185.)

Committee report Progress ; to sit again to-morrow.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : TUESDAY, 30TH MAY, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with viz. :—London and North-Western Railway.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table	189
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London Gas Bill. —A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee ..	189
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Shepton Mallet Gas Company (Electric Lighting) Bill [H.L.]—The consent of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments	189
Hitchen and District Gas Bill .—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments	189
Birmingham Corporation Bill ; Swansea Corporation Bill ; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.]; Stockport Corporation Bill ; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill ; Blackpool Improvement Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments	189
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Formby Township Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments	189
London Gas Bill .—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Mostyn be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Newton; read, and agreed to ..	189
Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill .—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 18th and 19th instant, discharged, and Bill committed	190
Acton Sewage Bill .—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on Thursday the 11th May discharged, and Bill committed	190
Highland Railway Bill .—Read 2 ^a , and committed	190
Barrymore Estate Bill [H.L.]; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.].—Read 3 ^a , and passed, and sent to the Commons	190
Croydon Gas Bill ; Aylesbury Gas Bill ; Accrington Corporation Bill .—Read 3 ^a , with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons ..	190
Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill .—Brought from the Commons and read 1 ^a ; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 95)	190
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill .—To be read 2 ^a on Friday next.—(<i>The Earl of Denbigh</i>)	190
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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill.—House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived ; and Bills to be read 3 ^a on Friday next	191
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Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] ; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]—Read 3 ^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons	191
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LICENSED HOUSES. —Petition for early closing of ; of the Rotherham and District Sunday School Band of Hope Union ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table	191
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<i>Lord Burghclere</i>		195
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<i>Viscount Ridley</i>		211
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<i>Earl Spencer</i>		218

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock, to Friday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 30th MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [Lords]; Nottingham Corporation Bill [Lords]; University College, London (Transfer), Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 219

Skegness Water Bill. Read the third time, and passed 219

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill; LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 16) BILL. Read a second time, and committed 219

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 4).—MR. DE TATTON EGERTON reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Tuesday, 20th June, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

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Barrymore Estate Bill [LORDS] ; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords]. Read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 219

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have agreed to—Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill ; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill, without Amendment.

Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill, with an Amendment.

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill ; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill ; Otley Improvement Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to—Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, “ An Act to amend and extend the Workmen’s Compensation Acts, 1897 and 1900 ; and for purposes incidental thereto.” [Workmen’s Compensation Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, “ An Act to enable the Baron Garrymore to restore certain forfeited leases in the town of Tipperary ; and for other purposes.” [Barrymore Estate Bill [Lords].

And also, a Bill, intituled, “ An Act for extending the limits of supply of and for conferring further powers upon the North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Company ; and for other purposes.” [North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords] 219

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Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.

Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange) 244

Clause (Amendment of 4 Edw. VII., c. 7, s. 2, as to duty on stripped tobacco).
—(*Mr. Charles McArthur*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

<i>Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley)</i>	246
<i>Sir William Tomlinson (Preston)</i>	247
<i>Mr. Ritchie (Croydon)</i>	247
<i>Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth)</i>	248
<i>Mr. Herbert Robertson (Hackney, S.)</i>	250
<i>Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside)</i>	250
<i>Mr. Austen Chamberlain</i>	251
<i>Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar)</i>	253
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i>	256

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<i>Mr. Helme (Lancashire, Lancaster)</i>	257
<i>Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.)</i>	258
<i>Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick)</i>	259
<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, W.)</i>	259

Question put

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 158 ; Noes, 221. (Division List No. 186).

<i>Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.)</i>	267
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Clause (Abolition of sugar duty)—(*Mr. Channing*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the clause be read a second time.”

<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcester-shire, E.)</i>	270
<i>Mr. Edwards (Radnor)</i>	273
<i>Sir James Joicey (Durham, Chester-le-Street)</i>	274
<i>Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)</i>	275
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<i>Mr. John Wilson (Durham, Mid)</i>	279
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<i>Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich)</i>	282
<i>Mr. Harwood (Bolton)</i>	283
<i>Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs)</i>	284
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles</i>	285

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 166 ; Noes, 231. (Division List No. 187.)

<i>Mr. Charles Douglas (Lanarkshire, N.W.)</i>	291
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And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening

EVENING SITTING.

Finance Bill.

Considered in Committee.]

(In the Committee).

[**Mr. JEFFREYS** (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

<i>Mr. Charles Douglas</i>	292
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Clause (Coal nuts)—(*Mr. Charles Douglas*)—brought up, and read the first time.

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

<i>Mr. Baird (Glasgow, Central)</i>	293
<i>Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross)</i>	293
<i>Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarkshire, Partick)</i>	294
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<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.)</i>	303
<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid)</i>	305

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 127 ; Noes, 164. (Division List No. 188.)

Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

<i>Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury)</i>	312
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Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned at two ty-five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 31st MAY, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

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Great Central Railway Bill [LORDS]. —Read a second time, and committed	313
Dublin United Tramways Bill (by Order).—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time	313

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Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill. —Lords Amendment considered, and agreed to	313
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RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 6).—Mr. KEARLEY reported from the Committee on Group 6 of Railway Bills ; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday, 26th June, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

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London Southern Tramways Bill. —Reported [Preamble not proved] ; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	314
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RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 8).—Mr. ASHTON reported from the Committee on Group 8 of Railway Bills ; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table	314
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PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).—Sir HENRY AUBREY-FLETCHER reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills ; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Friday, at a quarter before Twelve of the clock.

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Bill to be read the third time	314
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Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [LORDS].—Reported, without Amendment ; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time	314
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Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [LORDS], AND LAUTOUR'S DIVORCE BILL [LORDS].—Ordered That the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings in the House of Lords on the Second Reading of Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords], together with the Documents deposited in each case, be returned to the House of Lords.—(*Mr. Serjeant Hemphill*)

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP 1).—Sir JAMES WOODHOUSE reported from the Committee on Group 1 of Private Bills ; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table	314
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SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.—Petition from Morecambe, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	315

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Right of Way (Scotland) Bill. —"To amend the Law relating to Rights of Way in Scotland," presented by Mr. Buchanan ; supported by Mr. Bryce, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. Crombie, and Captain Sinclair ; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, June 28th, and to be printed. [Bill 234]	352
Street Traffic Regulation Bill. —"To provide for the Regulation of Traffic in Streets," presented by Mr. Shackleton ; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 235]	352
Under Sheriffs (Ireland) Bill. —"To regulate the appointment, duties, and remuneration of Under Sheriffs in Ireland," presented by Mr. John Gordon ; supported by Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. T. L. Corbett, and Mr. Charles Craig ; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, June 21st, and to be printed. [Bill 236]	352

COMMITTEE (ASCENSION DAY).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Committees do not sit To-morrow, being Ascension Day, until Two of the clock."—(*Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*)

<i>Sir John Leng (Dundee)</i>	353
<i>Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.)</i>	354

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'two,' and insert the word 'twelve' (*Sir John Leng*) instead thereof."

Question put, "That the word 'two' stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 199 ; Noes, 135. (Division List No. 189.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, that Committees do not sit To-morrow, being Ascension Day, until Two of the Clock.

Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance Bill.—Read a third time, and passed.

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Government Ships Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate, on Question [17th May] “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Question again proposed.

<i>Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury)</i>	357
<i>The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyma), Suffolk, Woodbridge</i> ..	357

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 201 ; Noes, 164. (Division List, No. 190.)

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

Naval Lands (Volunteers) Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question [May 15th], “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Question again proposed.

<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.)</i>	361
<i>Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)</i>	367
<i>The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's)</i>	368
<i>Mr. O'Mara (Kilkenny, S.)</i>	368
<i>Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.)</i>	368
<i>Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.)</i>	371
<i>Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs)</i>	371
<i>The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Arthur Lee, Hampshire, Fareham)</i>	372
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i>	375
<i>Sir A. Hayter (Walsall)</i>	376

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

And, there being no further Business set down for the Afternoon Sitting.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair until the Evening Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887.

<i>Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.)</i>	377
<i>Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.)</i>	383

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That, in the opinion of this House, the presence of The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act on the Statute-book is a gross violation of the Constitution, without parallel in any other portion of His Majesty's dominions, and that the Act should be immediately repealed.”—(*Mr. John O'Connor.*)

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<i>Colonel Saunderson (Armagh, N.)</i>	385
<i>Mr. Haviland Burke (King's Co., Tullamore)</i>	391
<i>Mr. O'Malley (Galway, Connemara)</i>	394
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<i>The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.)</i>	403
<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.)</i>	411

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 106 ; Noes, 163. (Division List No. 191.)

STANDING COMMITTEE (ACTION OF CHAIRMAN.)—Order for resuming adjourned debate on Question [4th April] read, and discharged. Motion withdrawn 415

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, THURSDAY, 1ST JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Mansfield Corporation Bill [Lords] ; Whitby Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time	417
Bolton Corporation Bill. —Read the third time, and passed	417
North Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill. —Read the third time, and passed. [New Title]	417
Caledonian Railway Bill. —As amended, considered ; to be read the third time	417
Clyde Navigation (Reconstruction) Bill [LORDS]. —Reported, with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	417
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill. —Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed] ; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow	417

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No 15) Bill .—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.	
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Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill .—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.	
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Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill .—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	418
North British Railway (General Powers) Bill ; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]; Sheffield University Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	418
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Shropshire, Staffordshire, and Worcestershire Electric Power Bill (CHANGED FROM "SHROPSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE ELECTRIC POWER BILL").—Reported, with Amendments [Title amended]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	418
Lands Valuation (Scotland) Bill .—Adjourned debate on Second Reading [28th March] further adjourned from To-morrow till Friday, 30th June	418

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POLICE ACT, 1890 .—Copy presented, of Correspondence relative to the refusal of the Secretary of State's Certificate under Section 17 (2) of the Act to the River Tyne Police Force for the year ended September 29th, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	418
AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE .—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 17th May; <i>Sir John Leng</i>]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 185]	418
UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREW'S .—Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University for the year ended 30th September, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 186.]	419
UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREW'S .—Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrew's for the year 1903-4 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 187.]	419
TREATY SERIES (No. 14, 1905) .—Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and Austria-Hungary providing for the settlement by Arbitration of certain Classes of Questions which may arise between the respective Governments. Signed at London, 11th January, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	419
TREATY SERIES (No. 15, 1905) .—Copy presented, of Treaty between the United Kingdom and Cuba for the Mutual Surrender of Fugitive Criminals. Signed at Havana, 3rd October, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	419

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SUPPLY [9TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £146,954, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on March 31st, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board."

<i>Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland)</i>	.. .. .	458
<i>The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.)</i>	.. .. .	461
<i>Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple)</i>	.. .. .	463

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the President of the Local Government Board."—(Mr. Soares.)

<i>Mr. Arthur Stanley (Lancashire, Ormskirk)</i>	.. .. .	470
<i>Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.)</i>	.. .. .	475
<i>Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford)</i>	.. .. .	477
<i>Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich)</i>	.. .. .	482
<i>Mr. Lloyd Wharton (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon)</i>	.. .. .	485
<i>Mr. Lambert (Devonshire, South Molton)</i>	.. .. .	486
<i>Sir Philip Muntz (Warwickshire, Tamworth)</i>	.. .. .	489
<i>Mr. Labouchere (Northampton)</i>	.. .. .	490
<i>Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport)</i>	.. .. .	492
<i>Mr. Scott-Montagu (Hampshire, New Forest)</i>	.. .. .	497
<i>The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central)</i>	.. .. .	500
<i>Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.)</i>	.. .. .	503
<i>Mr. Houston (Liverpool, West Toxteth)</i>	.. .. .	506
<i>General Laurie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest)</i>	.. .. .	507

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this evening.

North Eastern Railway Bill.

(BY ORDER.)

As amended, considered.

<i>Mr. Pemberton (Sunderland)</i>	.. .. .	508
<i>Mr. Arthur Henderson (Durham, Barnard Castle)</i>	.. .. .	510

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 39, line 1, to leave out Sub-section (d) of Clause 54, and insert the words (d) Nothing in this section contained shall authorise the company, in any city, borough, or other urban district provided with a system of tramways owned or worked by the local authority, to run any railway omnibus otherwise than for the conveyance of railway passengers, passengers' luggage, and mails to or

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from a station or hotel of the company, without the consent in writing of the local authority for such period as may be therein specified.”—
(*Mr. Pemberton.*)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill.

<i>Colonel Bowles (Middlesex, Enfield)</i>	543
<i>Mr. Samuel Roberts (Sheffield, Ecclesall)</i>	515
<i>Sir John Rolleston (Leicester)</i>	515
<i>Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.)</i>	516
<i>Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.)</i>	516
<i>Mr. Harwood (Bolton)</i>	517
<i>Mr. Lloyd Wharton (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon)</i>	518
<i>Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.)</i>	520
<i>The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars)</i>	522
<i>Mr. Whitley (Halifax)</i>	523
<i>Sir James Woodhouse (Huddersfield)</i>	525
<i>Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley)</i>	526

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 127 ; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 192.)

Bill to be read the third time.

North-East London Railway Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order for the Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

<i>Dr. Shipman (Northampton)</i>	528
--	-----

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the North-East London Railway Bill that it hear the parties on the Petition against the Bill deposited in the Private Bill Office of this House on the 11th day of February last by the Promoters of the Hammersmith, City, and North-East London Railway.”—
(*Dr. Shipman.*)

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the North-East London Railway Bill that it hear the parties on the Petition against the Bill deposited in the Private Bill Office of this House on the 11th day of February last by the Promoters of the Hammersmith, City, and North-East London Railway.—(*Dr. Shipman.*)

SUPPLY [9TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £146,954, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board."

Mr. Soares 529

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the President of the Local Government Board."
—(*Mr. Soares.*)

<i>Mr. Crooks (Woolwich)</i>	530
<i>Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University)</i>	533
<i>Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.)</i>	536
<i>The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central)</i>	538
<i>Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping)</i>	540

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 1st June ; *Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas*] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 188.] 540

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : FRIDAY, 2ND JUNE, 1905.

INTRODUCED.—Edward Stuart, Lord Bishop of Southwark, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6).

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Also the Certificates that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bills :—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8)

Also the certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Rhondda Urban District Council; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway.

And also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—Liverpool Corporation.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 541

Liverpool Corporation Bill.—Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday next 541

Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 541

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent, and the consent of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, in right of his Duchy of Cornwall, signified, and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 541

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 542

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 542

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill,—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 542

Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^a 542

London Gas Bill.—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned on Wednesday last over yesterday; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 542

London Gas Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Rosse, a member of the Select Committee, be appointed chairman of the said Committee; read, and agreed to 542

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (No. 1) Bill.—Read 2^a, and committed 542

Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons .. 542

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Morley Corporation Bill ; Brentwood Gas Bill ; North Sussex Gas Bill ; Colne Corporation Bill ; Croydon Corporation Bill ; Aberdare Urban District Council Bill.—Read 3 ^a , with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons	542
Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned yesterday over this day, and pray leave not to sit on Monday next until Two o'clock ; read, and leave given accordingly ..	542
Woolwich Borough Council Bill .—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on the 23rd of May last discharged, and Bill committed	542
Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc, Continuance Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill.—Brought from the Commons	543
Skegness Water Bill ; Bolton Corporation Bill ; North Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill.—Brought from the Commons ; read 1 ^a ; and referred to the Examiners	543
Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill .—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendment agreed to	543
Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill .—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to	543
Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.] ; Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Minutes of evidence and proceedings before this House on the Second Reading, together with the documents deposited in each case, returned from the Commons	543
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill (No. 97) ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill (No. 98).—Read 1 ^a ; to be printed ; and referred to the Examiners	543
Tramway Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] ; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	543
Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next	543
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—Read 2 ^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next	543
Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill ; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill ; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill.—House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived ; and Bills to be read 3 ^a on Monday next	543

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill. —Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill. Read 3 ^a (according to order), and passed	544
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Donovan's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Monday next	544
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FISHERIES (SCOTLAND). —Twenty-third Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1904. Part I. General Report	544
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No. 14 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and Austria-Hungary providing for the settlement by arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the respective Governments; signed at London, 11th January, 1905.

No. 15 (1905). Treaty between the United Kingdom and Cuba for the mutual surrender of fugitive criminals; signed at Havana, 3rd October, 1904	544
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No. 3387. Japan (Kobe and Osaka).

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No. 3389. France (Pondicherry and Karikal).

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ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 AND 1888.—Special Report by the Board of Trade under Section 1 of the Electric Lighting Act, 1888.]

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table'.. .. .	544
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EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895. —Order in Council of the 29th May, 1905, giving effect to a supplementary Convention with Switzerland, amending Article XVIII. of the Extradition Treaty of 26th November, 1880	545
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PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899. —Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons (1) that the provisions of the Wemyss Dock Order are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order; (2) that, save as aforesaid, the Provisional Orders for which petitions were presented to the Secretary for Scotland on or before the 17th of April, 1905, be allowed to proceed, subject to such recommendations as may hereafter be made with respect to the several orders	545
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UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.—

Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of St. Andrews, under the provisions of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1903-1904.

Annual statistical report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrews to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1903-1904.. .. 545

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INDIA (PROGRESS AND CONDITION).—Statement exhibiting the moral and material progress and condition of India during the year 1903-1904. Fortieth Number 545

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Account of the receipts and expenditure of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland, for the year ended 31st December, 1904; together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon 545

HARWICH HARBOUR.—Abstract of the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the Harwich Harbour Conservancy Board from the time of their incorporation down to and inclusive of the 31st March, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table .. 546

Extradition Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 546

Naval and Military Medals Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next 546

Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance Bill.—Read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 96) 546

RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN.

Lord Newton 546

The Under Secretary of State for India (The Marquess of Bath) .. 553

The Marquess of Ripon 557

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Lansdowne) 560

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Earl Spencer 564

The Marquess of Lansdowne 565

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 2ND JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.)—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [Lords]; Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 566

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill.—Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Otley Improvement Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to 566

Rathmines and Rathgar Extension and Improvement Bill.—As amended, to be considered upon Monday next 566

Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 566

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—To be read the third time upon Monday next 566

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 566

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill.—As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed 566

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Croydon Gas Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill; Accrington Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Craster and Tralee and Fenit." [Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Melfort and Portencross." [Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [Lords]	567
Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [LORDS]. —Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 237]	567
Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [LORDS]. —Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 238]	567

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petitions in favour; from Buteshire; and Rothesay; to lie upon the Table	567
JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition of Royal and other Burghs of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table	567
WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.—Petition of Royal and other Burghs of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table	567

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 AND 1888.—Copy presented, of Special Report by the Board of Trade, under Section (1) of The Electric Lighting Act, 1888, respecting the Brentford Electric Lighting Order, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	567
EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.—Copy presented, of Order in Council of May 29th, 1905, giving effect to a Supplementary Convention with Switzerland amending Article XVIII. of the Extradition Treaty of November 26th, 1880 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	568

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

PROMOTION OF ASSISTANT CLERKS IN THE NATIONAL EDUCATION OFFICE, DUBLIN.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish	568
AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS ACTS.—Question, Mr. Hardy (Kent, Ashford); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes	568
OUTBREAK OF NECROSIS AT MESSRS. MORELANDS WORKS, GLOUCESTER.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	569
PROVISION OF NEW SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTY OF LONDON.—Question, Dr. Macnamara (Camberwell, N.); Answer, Sir William Anson	570
HIGHWORTH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL AND STRATTON ST. MARGARET'S SEWAGE SCHEME.—Question, Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice (Wiltshire, Cricklade); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour	571

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NAMES OF REVISING BARRISTERS FOR IRISH CONSTITUENCIES. —Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	571
INCREASE OF SALARY FOR MR. PATRICK COYLE, OF KILDARRAGH NATIONAL SCHOOL. —Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	571
AMALGAMATION OF BOYS' AND GIRLS' SCHOOLS IN IRELAND. —Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	572
PLURAL VOTING BILL —[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.	
<i>Mr. Soames (Norfolk, S.)</i>	573
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."	
<i>Mr. Whitmore (Chelsea)</i>	576
<i>Mr. Griffith Boscawen (Kent, Tunbridge)</i>	579
<i>Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland)</i>	587
<i>Mr. Bond (Nottingham, E.)</i>	589
<i>Mr. Renwick (Newcastle-on-Tyne)</i>	590
<i>Mr. Herbert Robertson (Hackney, S.)</i>	594
<i>Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland)</i>	597
<i>Sir Henry Kimber (Wandsworth)</i>	599
<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i>	604
<i>The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Grant Lawson, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk)</i>	607
Question put.	
The House divided :—Ayes, 120; Noes, 191. (Division List No. 193.)	
Words added.	
Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.	
Second Reading put off for six months.	
Local Government (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill. —Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn	613
Catholic Disabilities Removal Bill. —Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn	613
Contempt of Court (Ireland) Bill. —Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn	613
Women's Enfranchisement Bill. [SECOND READING].—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [May 12th], "That the Bill be now read a second time."	
Question again proposed.	
<i>Mr. Herbert Robertson (Hackney, S.)</i>	613

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day six months.’”—(*Mr. Lafontaine.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham) 616

And, it being half-past Five of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

FOREIGN SHIPS (STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS).—Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire to what extent the statutory requirements applying to British ships trading to and from ports in the United Kingdom should be made applicable to foreign vessels trading to and from such ports.

Committee accordingly nominated of Mr. Crean, Mr. Charles Devlin, Sir Theodore Doxford, Mr. Munro-Ferguson, Mr. Leverton Harris, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. McKenna, Mr. David Morgan, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Runciman, Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart, Mr. Wolff, and Sir James Woodhouse.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 620

Whereupon Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Six o'clock, till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 5TH JUNE, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9); Wemyss Dock.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 621

Central Electric Supply Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified: and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 621

County of London Electric Supply Company Bill [H.L.].—The consent of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 621

May 18.]

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, without Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow	621
Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with an Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow	621
Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table	621
Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments	621
London Gas Bill. —Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit again until Tuesday the 4th of July next	621
London and North-Western Railway Bill. —Read 2 ^a , and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	622
Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Read 3 ^a . An Amendment made. Bill passed, and sent to the Commons	622
Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.]; Blackpool Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]. Read 3 ^a , and passed, and sent to the Commons	622
Stockport Corporation Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. Read 3 ^a , with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons	622
Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Otley Improvement Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to	622
Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill [H.L.]. Committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	622
Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow	622
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3 ^a to-morrow	622
Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill. Read 3 ^a (according to order), and passed	622
Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived and Bill to be read 3 ^a to-morrow	622
Donovan's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3 ^a to-morrow	

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3392. Denmark.

No. 3393. Germany (Hamburg).

No. 3394. Venezuela (Ciudad Bolivar).

LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1898.—Return showing the total payments into and out of the Local Taxation (Scotland) Account, for the Financial Year 1904-1905 623

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE.—Statistical tables for the year 1904. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 623

SUPERANNUATION.—Treasury Minute, dated 31st May, 1905, declaring that William Thirkell, rural postman, General Post Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department 623

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).—Statutory Rules and Orders, 1905: No 581. The Postal Order (Colonial) Amendment (No. 3) Regulations, 1905, dated 22nd May, 1905 623

POLLING DISTRICTS.—(County of Warwick). Order made by the county council of the county of Warwick, altering certain polling districts in the various Parliamentary divisions of the county.

(County of Southampton). Order made by the county council of the county of Southampton, altering certain polling districts in the Andover Parliamentary division.

(County of Middlesex.) Order made by the county council of the county of Middlesex, rearranging certain polling districts in the Hornsey Parliamentary division.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 623

Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee (with Proceedings of the Committee), made, and to be printed. (No. 99.) Bill reported with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday the 26th instant; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 100) 624

Naval and Military Medals Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 624

DISLOYAL IRISH TEACHERS.

Lord Oranmore and Browne 624

The Lord President of the Council and President of the Board of Education
(The Marquess of Londonderry) 626

June 5.]

Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, Amendment Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING].—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) 628Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.**FISCAL POLICY—THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.***The Duke of Devonshire* 629*The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Lansdowne)* 639*Lord James of Hereford* 646*Earl Spencer* 649*Lord Balfour of Burleigh* 652*The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury)* 654*The Earl of Rosebery* 655*Lord Avebury* 663**REAFFORESTATION IN IRELAND.***Lord Castletown* 664*The Lord President of the Council and President of the Board of Education*
(*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 665House adjourned at a quarter past Seven o'clock till To-morrow,
a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 5TH JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.—The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Barrymore Estate Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 667

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PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 667

SUBSTITUTED BILLS [LORDS] (PETITION FOR BILL).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz.:—Wemyss Dock [Lords] 667

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 17) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 668

Caledonian Railway Bill.—Read the third time, and passed. [New Title] 668

Dublin United Tramways Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 668

Lautor's Divorce Bill [LORDS].—Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords].
Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 668

Midland Railway Bill.—Read the third time and passed 668

North Eastern Railway Bill (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Read the third time, and passed 668

Bootle Corporation Bill.—London County Council (General Powers) Bill.
As amended, considered; to be read the third time 668

Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [LORDS].—Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords];
Leven's Patent Bill [Lords]; Nottingham Corporation Bill [Lords]; Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Tees Valley Water Board Bill [Lords]; University College, London (Transfer), Bill [Lords];
Weaver Navigation Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed .. 668

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow 669

Nine Mile Point Railway Bill.—Order [18th April] for Committee read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(Mr. Caldwell) 669

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.
Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 669

June 5.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No 13) Bill. —Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]. Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow	669
London Government Scheme (Hackney and Edmonton Unions) Bill. —Reported, without Amendment [Scheme confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time upon Thursday, 22nd June ..	669
London County Council (Money) Bill. —South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	669
Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [LORDS]. —Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. Bill to be read the third time	669

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill, without Amendment.

Morley Corporation Bill; Brentwood Gas Bill; North Sussex Gas Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; Croydon Corporation Bill; Aberdare Urban District Council Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, “An Act to include Bribery amongst Extradition Crimes.” [Extradition Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to authorise new gasworks and remove the existing works; to construct sewerage works; to acquire lands for public improvements; to provide a Pump Room and Baths, and generally to confer further powers on the Urban District Council of Matlock Bath and Scarthin Nick in regard to the local government of their district.” [Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to authorise the Urban District Council of Llandrindod Wells to make further provision with regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes.” [Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to empower the Urban District Council of Littlehampton to purchase the ferry rights over the River Arun at Littlehampton; and to construct a bridge over that river; and for other purposes.” [Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to authorise agreements between the Metropolitan Electric Supply Company, Limited, and the Acton Urban District Council with respect to the supply of electrical energy by the company to the district council; and to confer further powers on the company.” [Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Blackpool to widen Lytham Road; to construct additional tramways; to extend their powers in regard to the supply of sea water; to make further provision in regard to their loans; and for other purposes." [Blackpool Improvement Bill [Lords.]

And also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make the Township of Formby, in the county of Lancaster, a separate urban district; to confirm an agreement relating to the transfer of property and liabilities; to confer powers upon the Urban District Council in relation to the seashore; and for other purposes." [Formby Township Bill [Lords] 669

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Lieutenant-Colonel Edmund Bernard Talbot, M.V.O., D.S.O., commonly called Lord Edmund Talbot, County of Sussex (South Western or Chichester Division) 729

Finance Bill [THIRD READING].—Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That the Bill be now read the third time.”

<i>Mr. Flynn</i> (Cork, N.)	729
<i>Mr. Ashton</i> (Bedfordshire, Luton)	731
<i>Mr. Guest</i> (Plymouth)	734
<i>Sir Henry Fowler</i> (Wolverhampton, E.)	736
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles</i> (Lynn Regis)	737
<i>Sir Walter Foster</i> (Derbyshire, Ilkeston)	740
<i>Sir Charles Renshaw</i> (Renfrew, W.)	742
<i>Mr. Lough</i> (Islington, W.)	743
<i>Mr. John Wilson</i> (Falkirk Burghs)	747
<i>Mr. Munro Ferguson</i> (Leith Burghs)	749
<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer</i> (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcester-shire, E.)	751
<i>Mr. Dalziel</i> (Kirkcaldy Burghs)	755
<i>Mr. Bright</i> (Shropshire, Oswestry)	758

Amendment proposed—

“ To leave out the word ‘ now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words, ‘ upon this day six months.’ ”—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Question proposed, “ That the word ‘ now ’ stand part of the Question.”

<i>Mr. O'Mara</i> (Kilkenny, S.)	760
<i>Mr. Whitley</i> (Halifax)	762
<i>Mr. Ainsworth</i> (Argyllshire)	764
<i>Mr. Spear</i> (Devonshire, Tavistock)	764
<i>Mr. Cathcart Wason</i> (Orkney and Shetland)	766
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<i>Mr. Keir Hardie</i> (Merthyr Tydvil)	768
<i>Mr. John Wilson</i> (Falkirk Burghs)	772

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Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 216 ; Noes, 132. (Division List No. 194.)

Main Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 215 ; Noes, 143. (Division List No. 195.)

Bill read the third time, and passed.

SUPPLY (18TH MAY).

Resolution reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1905-6.—“ That a sum, not exceeding £1,905,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants-in-Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906.”

Resolution read a second time.

Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 779

And, it being half-past Seven of the Clock, Further Consideration of the Resolution stood adjourned until this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [18TH MAY] REPORT.—Order read for Further Consideration of Resolution :—

“ That a sum, not exceeding £1,905,200, be granted to His Majesty to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants-in-Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906.”

Resolution further considered.

Mr. Whitley 781

Amendment proposed—

“ To leave out ‘£1,905,200,’ and insert ‘£1,895,200’—(*Mr. Whitley*)—instead thereof.”

Question proposed, “ That ‘£1,905,200,’ stand part of the said Resolution.”

Mr. Purvis (Peterborough) 782
The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Arthur Lee, Hampshire, Fareham) 784
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 785
Mr. Benn (Devonport) 787

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<i>Mr. Goddard (Ipswich)</i>	788
<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.)</i>	789
<i>The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyma, Suffolk, Woodbridge)</i> ..	790
<i>The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield)</i>	791

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 144 ; Noes, 86. (Division List, No. 196.)

Resolution agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending the 31st day of March, 1906, the sum of £16,636,200 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.”—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

<i>Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs)</i>	794
<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcester-shire, E.)</i>	795
<i>Mr. Dalziel</i>	798

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 147 ; Noes, 92. (Division List No. 197.)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow ; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

Workmen's Compensation Bill [LORDS].—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

<i>The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's)</i>	799
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Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That the Bill be now read a second time.”

<i>Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire)</i>	804
<i>Sir J. Stirling-Maxwell (Glasgow, College)</i>	810

Amendment proposed—

“ To leave out from the word ‘ That,’ to the end of the Question, in order to add the words ‘ in the opinion of this House, no Bill to amend the Compensation for Accident (Workmen) Act, 1897, can be considered satisfactory which does not contain provisions for compensation for injury to health in dangerous trades.’ ”—(*Mr. Tennant.*)

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Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. John Burns (Battersea) 811

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Mr. Samuel Roberts*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed on Tuesday, June 20th.

ADJOURNMENT.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

MINISTERS AND THE MOTOR-CAR ACT.

Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 815

Sir A. Acland-Hood 815

Question put, and agreed to.

EAST INDIA LOANS (RAILWAYS).—Committee to consider of authorising the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise money in the United Kingdom on the security of the Revenues of India for the construction, extension, and equipment of Railways in India by State Agency or through the Agency of Companies (King's Recommendation signified), this day.—(*Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) 816

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 6TH JUNE, 1905.

BARON GRAVES.—Report from the Lord Chancellor, That, in the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, the claim of Henry Cyril Percy, Baron Graves of Gravesend, in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representatives Peers for Ireland is of such a nature that it ought to be referred to the Committee for Privileges; read, and ordered to lie on the Table .. 817

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Skegness Water; Bolton Corporation; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels).

Also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15).

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in respect of the petition for the following Bill:—South Barracas (Buenos Ayres) Gas and Coke Company.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.. .. . 817

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Wemyss Dock Bill [H.L.] .—Presented, and read 1 ^a	817
STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE .—Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Liverpool Corporation Bill, ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed.	
Read, and agreed to	817
SOUTH BARRACAS (BUENOS AYRES) GAS AND COKE COMPANY —(PETITION FOR BILL). Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday the 27th instant ..	818
Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.] —(PUDSEY CORPORATION TRAMWAYS ORDER).—A Petition of Messrs. Dyson and Company, of 9, Great George Street, Westminster, Parliamentary agents, praying for leave to present a petition of the Yorkshire Electric Power Company, praying to be heard by counsel against the Order, although the time limited by Standing Order No. 92 for presenting such petition has expired ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table ; and Standing Order No. 92 to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said petition ..	818
London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. Reported, without Amendment	818
Highland Railway Bill. Reported, with an Amendment	818
Halifax Corporation Bill ; Bristol Blind Asylum Bill [H.L.] ; Acton Sewage Bill ; Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.] ; Oldham and Saddleworth District Tramways Bill [H.L.] . Reported, with Amendments	818
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Rhondda Urban District Council Bill .—Read 2 ^a , and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	818
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Birmingham Corporation Bill .—Read 3 ^a , with the Amendments ; further Amendments made ; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons	818
Finance Bill ; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. Brought from the Commons	819
Caledonian Railway Bill ; Dublin United Tramways Bill ; Midland Railway Bill ; North-Eastern Railway Bill ; Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill. Brought from the Commons ; read 1 ^a ; and referred to the Examiners	819
Newry, Keady, and Tynan Light.Railway Bill ; Bootle Corporation Bill ; London County Council (General Powers) Bill. Brought from the Commons ; read 1 ^a ; and referred to the Examiners	819

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Latour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]; Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.] Returned from the Commons agreed to	819
Accrington Corporation Bill ; Aylesbury Gas Bill ; Croydon Gas Bill . Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to	819
Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill [H.L.].—Committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next	819
Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee Negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next	819
Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order). The Amendment proposed by the Select Committee made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next	819
Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—House (according to order). Amendments made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Thursday next	819
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill . Read 2 ^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next	820
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill . Read 3 ^a (according to order), and passed	820
Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Read 3 ^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons	820
Donovan's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Read 3 ^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons	820
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill .—Read 1 ^a ; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 104)	820
Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.].	
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3 ^a ."—(<i>The Chairman of Committees.</i>)	
<i>Lord Kinnaird</i>	820
<i>The Chairman of Committees (The Earl of Onslow)</i>	821
<i>Lord Avebury</i>	822
<i>The Earl of Camperdown</i>	823
<i>Lord Kinnaird</i>	824

On Question, Bill read 3^a, and passed; and sent to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS. —Message from the Commons for leave for the Clerk of the Parliaments to attend to be examined as a witness before the Select Committee of that House. Leave given accordingly, and a Message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith	824
FISHERIES (SCOTLAND). —Twenty-third Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1904. Part II. Salmon Fisheries	825
INDIA (ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES, 1905-1906). —Explanatory Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India	825
IRON ORE DEPOSITS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES. —Reports on iron ore deposits in foreign countries, compiled at the Board of Trade from information collected by His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular officers	825
NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY. —Forty-eighth Annual Report of the Trustees of National Portrait Gallery, 1904-1905. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table	825
PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACTS, 1860-1904. —Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland appointing police cells at Inverary, in the county of Argyll, to be a legal prison for the detention of prisoners for a period not exceeding three days before, or during, or after trial	825
IRISH LAND ACT, 1903. —Treasury Minute, dated 30th May, 1905, directing that the Trust Fund Accounts of the Public Trustee under the Irish Land Act, 1903, shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table	825
Supreme Court of Judicature, Ireland (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]: Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland) Bill. —Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment: and to be read 2 nd on Thursday next	825
Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) No. 2 Bill [H.L.] —Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments. The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next: and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 102)	825
Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, Amendment Bill [H.L.] —House in Committee (according to order).—Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived: and Bill to be read 3 rd on Thursday next	826
Finance Bill. —Read 1 st : and to be printed. (No. 103)	826
Advertisements Regulation Bill [H.L.] —Reported from the Standing Committee with a further Amendment. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House, and by the Standing Committee, to be received on Thursday next: and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 101)	826

June 6.]

IMPORTATION AND SALE OF LIQUOR IN WEST AFRICA.

<i>The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury</i>	826
<i>The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Duke of Marlborough)</i>	836
<i>Lord Stanmore</i>	844

House adjourned at five minutes past Six o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : TUESDAY, 6TH JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO NOT COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have not been complied with, viz. :—**Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [Lords]**.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders	846
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PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—**South Barracas (Buenos Ayres) Gas and Coke Company Bill [Lords]**.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders	846
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Accrington Corporation Bill. —Aylesbury Gas Bill; Croydon Gas Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to	846
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Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill. —Read the third time, and passed	846
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Clacton Improvement Bill [LORDS]. —Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time	846
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Newry, Keady, and Tynan Light Railway Bill (CHANGED FROM "ULSTER AND CONNAUGHT LIGHT RAILWAY BILL").—As amended, considered	846
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Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]	847
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North British Railway (General Powers) Bill. —As amended, considered; to be read the third time	847
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June 6.]

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Mansfield Corporation Bill [LORDS].—Whitby Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed	847
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Bootle Corporation Bill.—Ordered, That in the case of the Bootle Corporation Bill, Standing Order 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed	847
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London County Council (General Powers) Bill.

Ordered, That, in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, Standing Order 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

(King's Consent, and Prince of Wales' Consent, as Duke of Cornwall, signified). Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed. [New Title]	847
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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 17) Bill. —Read a second time, and committed	847
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Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill (By Order).—Read the third time, and passed	847
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PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).—Sir HENRY AUBREY-FLETCHER reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, the 21st June, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table	847
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MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill, without Amendment.

Stockport Corporation Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, “An Act to regulate and restrict the wearing of Naval and Military Medals and Decorations.” [Naval and Military Medals Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to dissolve the marriage of Alice Edith Donovan, the wife of Daniel Augustine Donovan, with the said Daniel Augustine Donovan, and to enable her to marry again; and for other purposes.” [Donovan's Divorce Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act for incorporating and conferring powers on the Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company.” [Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens of the City and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne to purchase by agreement the undertaking of the Scotswood Bridge Company; to provide for the composition by the several local authorities interested of the tolls now leviable by the said Bridge Company and of the toll known as the Thorough or Great Toll now leviable by the Newcastle Corporation and the extinction of those tolls respectively; to provide for an increase in the public library rate; and for other purposes." [Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [Lords.]

And also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board to make new waterworks; and for other purposes." [Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords.]

847

Donovan's Divorce Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time

848

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [LORDS].—Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [Lords]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills

848

PETITIONS.

CHARTERED SOCIETIES BILL.—Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table

849

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Deskford, for alteration; to lie upon the Table

849

STREET BETTING BILL.—Petition from West Ham, in favour; to lie upon the Table

849

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition of the United Free Church of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table

849

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Twenty-third Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1904. Part II. Salmon Fisheries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table

849

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).—Copy presented, of Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland appointing Police Cells at Inveraray, in the county of Argyle, to be a legal prison for the detention of prisoners for a period not exceeding three days before or during or after trial, and of convicted prisoners for a period not exceeding seven days from the date of conviction [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 192]

849

IRON ORE DEPOSITS.—Copy presented, of Reports on Iron Ore Deposits in foreign countries, compiled at the Board of Trade from information collected by His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers [by Command]; to lie upon the Table

849

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NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.—Copy presented, of Forty-eighth Annual Report of the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery, 1904-5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	850
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IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated May 30th, 1905, directing that the Trust Fund Accounts of the Public Trustee, under The Irish Land Act, 1903, shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	850
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EAST INDIA (ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES, 1905-6).—Copy presented, of Explanatory Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	850
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EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.—Ordered, That the several Accounts and Papers which have been presented to the House in this session of Parliament relating to the Revenues of India be referred to the consideration of a Committee of the Whole House.—(*Mr. Secretary Brodrick*).

Resolved, That this House will, upon Wednesday, June 21st, resolve itself into the said Committee.—(*Mr. Secretary Brodrick*) 850

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS.—Return ordered, “ of the number of Questions put to Ministers and others during the Sessions 1893 to 1904, inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 101, of Session 1893).” (<i>Mr. Henniker Heaton</i>)	850
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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

THE MEDICAL COUNCIL.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	850
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SHOP HOURS ACT 1904—CLOSING ORDER.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	851
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REFUSAL OF CERTIFICATES FOR WEIGHING MACHINES OF BRITISH MONEY WEIGHT CALCULATING SCALE COMPANY.—Question, Mr. Harwood (Bolton); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law	852
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STRANDING OF THE “SYREN.”—Question, Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool Exchange); Answer, Mr. Pretyma	852
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DISCHARGES FROM PORTSMOUTH DOCKYARD.—Question, Mr. Crooks (Woolwich); Answer, Mr. Pretyma	853
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INSPECTION OF WINES AND SPIRITS IN BOND.—Question, Mr. Crooks; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish	853
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MAXIMUM SALARY OF OPERATING TELEGRAPHIST.—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley	853
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TELEGRAPHIST WILSON, OF CLONES AND THE POSTAL TELEGRAPH CLERKS ASSOCIATION.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley	854
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REGULATIONS FOR EXPORT OF TOBACCO AND CIGARS.—Question, Mr. Stanhope (Leicestershire); Answer, Mr. Austin Chamberlain	854
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INDIAN VICEROY'S GENERAL EARTHQUAKE FUND.—Question, Sir Seymour King (Hull Central); Answer, Mr. Brodrick	855
INDIAN ARMY RE-ORGANISATION—LORD KITCHENER'S PROPOSALS.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick	855
SOUTHERN NIGERIA PROCLAMATION, No. 15, of 1903.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton	856

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

THE GOLD COAST LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND PUBLIC WORKS IN THAT COLONY.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington)	857
REPORT OF THE BRUSSELS SUGAR CONVENTION.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.)	857
DUTIES ON GERMAN EXPORTS.—Question, Mr. Bright (Shropshire, Oswestry); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars)	857
PROHIBITION OF IMPORTS OF SPANISH SUGAR.—Question, Mr. Lough and Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law	858
ALIENS BILL—GOVERNMENT AMENDMENTS.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's)	859
UNDETECTED CRIME IN ENGLAND.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	859
THREATENING LETTERS IN ENGLAND.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	860
VAGRANCY LAWS.—Question, Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore (Lincolnshire, Gainsboro'); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	860
DIVORCE CASES IN THE ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy (Cavan, W.); Answer, The Attorney-General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs)	861
LLANDECWYN SCHOOL.—Question, Mr. Osmond Williams (Merionethshire); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University)	861
LLANELLYD SCHOOL.—Question, Mr. Osmond Williams; Answer, Sir William Anson	862
BASE COINAGE IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queens County, Ossory); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.)	862
DREENAVURRIG.—Questions, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answers, Mr. Walter Long	862

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MURDER AND MANSLAUGHTER CASES IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	863
PROSECUTIONS FOR INJURY TO PROPERTY IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	863
CRIMES AGAINST THE PERSON IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	864
FORGERY IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr) ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	864
FIREARMS IN ULSTER.—Question, Mr. Reddy ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long ..	864
THREATENING LETTERS IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	865
MR. MAYBERRY'S KENMARE ESTATE.—Questions, Mr. Boland and Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.) ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	865
GRANTS TO TECHNICAL AND AGRICULTURAL SCHEMES IN KERRY.—Question, Mr. Murphy ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	865
PRIVATE DAHAN, ROYAL IRISH RIFLES.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy ; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) ..	865
VALENTIA ISLAND—TRADERS' GRIEVANCES.—Question, Mr. Boland ; Answer, Mr. Bonar Law	866
THE AMIR.—Question, Mr. Vincent Kennedy ; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)	866
SOUTH AMERICAN NAVIES.—Question, Mr. Cremer (Shoreditch, Haggerston) ; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	867
TREATIES OF ARBITRATION.—Question, Mr. Cremer ; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour ..	867
NAVAL DISARMAMENT.—Questions, Mr. Cremer ; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour ..	868
PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.—Third report brought up, and read ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	869
PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.—Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to give leave to Sir Henry Graham, K.C.B., the Clerk of the Parliaments, to attend to be examined as a Witness before the Committee of Public Accounts.—(<i>Sir Arthur Hayter</i>) ..	869

NEW BILL.

Port Sanitary Authorities Expenses Bill.—“To remove doubts as to the legality of certain payments by Port Sanitary Authorities,” presented by Sir Walter Plummer ; supported by Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Sir James Joicey, Sir Henry Seymour King, Mr. William Lawrence, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Mr. David MacIver, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Robson, Sir John Barrington Simeon, Mr. Charles Wilson, and Mr. Yerburch ; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 22nd June, and to be printed. [Bill 239.]	839
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MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT.—MR. SPEAKER addressed the House announcing his intention of retiring from the Chair (all the Members being uncovered)	869
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<i>The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)</i>	871
<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs)</i>	872

MR. SPEAKER then retired from the Chair on the House resolving itself into Committee.

SUPPLY [10TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £154,925, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Sub-ordinate Departments, including a Grant in Aid."

<i>Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.)</i>	873
<i>Sir Edward Strachey (Somersetshire, S.)</i>	882

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100."—(*Sir Edward Strachey*.)

<i>Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend)</i>	884
<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.)</i>	885
<i>The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars)</i>	886
<i>Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich)</i>	888
<i>Mr. Coghill (Stoke-upon-Trent)</i>	889
<i>Mr. Llewellyn (Somersetshire, N.)</i>	890
<i>Mr. J. W. Wilson (Worcestershire, N.)</i>	890
<i>Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs)</i>	892
<i>Mr. Brigg (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley)</i>	893
<i>Mr. Harwood (Bolton)</i>	893
<i>Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth)</i>	894
<i>Mr. Bonar Law</i>	896
<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i>	899
<i>Mr. Ritchie (Croydon)</i>	903
<i>Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs)</i>	906
<i>Mr. Cumming Macdonald (Southwark, Rotherhithe)</i>	907
<i>Mr. Courtney Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield)</i>	907
<i>Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford)</i>	908
<i>Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.)</i>	910
<i>Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton)</i>	912
<i>Mr. Bonar Law</i>	913
<i>Mr. Whitley (Halifax)</i>	915

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 126 ; Noes, 195. (Division List No. 198.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CLASS I.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That a sum, not exceeding £16,565, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906 ; for maintaining certain Harbours under the Board of Trade, and for Grants in Aid of Harbours.”

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow ; Committee to sit again To-morrow 919

WAYS AND MEANS [5TH JUNE].

Resolution reported, “ That, towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending 31st day of March, 1906, the sum of £16,636,200 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.”

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Victor Cavendish.

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill.—“ To apply a sum out of the Consolidated Fund to the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be read a second time To-morrow” 919

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That this House do now adjourn.”
—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*)—put, and agreed to 920

Adjourned accordingly at twenty minutes before Seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 7TH JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill ; Colne Corporation Bill ; North Sussex Gas Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to 921

Barry Railway Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time 921

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Sheffield University Bill [LORDS]. As amended, to be considered upon Tuesday, 20th June	921
Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill (changed from "Shropshire and Worcestershire Electric Power Bill"). As amended, considered ; to be read the third time	921
Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [LORDS]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [Lords]; Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed	921
Metropolitan Railway Bill [LORDS] (by Order). Considered ; to be read the third time	921
<i>Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs)</i>	921
Rathmines and Rathgar Extension and Improvement Bill (BY ORDER). —As amended, considered ; to be read the third time	922
South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. —Ordered, That, in the case of the South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill, Standing Orders 220 and 246 be suspended, and that the Lords Amendments be now considered.—(<i>Mr. Caldwell.</i>)	
Lords Amendments considered accordingly, and agreed to	922
PRIVATE BILLS, ETC. —Ordered, That Standing Orders 39, 128, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against Private Bills or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, also for depositing at the Private Bill Office all Documents relating to any Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.—(<i>The Chairman of Ways and Means.</i>)	922
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill. Read the third time and passed	923
Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [LORDS]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments	923
Pier and Harbour Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill —"To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Aberystwyth," presented by Mr. Bonar Law ; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish ; read the first time ; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 240]..	924
Millport Piers and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill —"To confirm a Provisional Order, under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Millport Piers and Burgh Extension," presented by the Lord Advocate ; read the first time ; and, under Section 9 of the Act, ordered to be read a second time upon Tuesday, June 20th, and to be printed. [Bill 241]	924

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Port Glasgow Improvement Provisional Order Bill —"To confirm a Provisional Order, under The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, relating to the Burgh of Port Glasgow," presented by the Lord Advocate; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 242]	924
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Inverness Gas and Water Provisional Order Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order, under the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, relating to the Burgh of Inverness," presented by the Lord Advocate; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 243]	924
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Gamble's Divorce Bill [LORDS]. —Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.	
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Bill to be read the third time	924
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Gamble's Divorce Bill [LORDS]. —Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings in the House of Lords on the Second Reading of Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords], together with the documents deposited in the case, be returned to the House of Lords.—(<i>Mr. Attorney-General</i>)	924
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RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

UNEMPLOYED RELIEF (WORK) (LONDON). Return presented, relative thereto [ordered April 11th; <i>Mr. Whitmore</i>]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 193]	925
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ARMY. —Copy presented, of Report of the Committee appointed by the Army Council to consider the Question of Sales and Refunds to Contractors in South Africa, together with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	925
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ARMY. —Copy presented, of Evidence taken before the Committee appointed by the Army Council to consider the question of sales and refunds to Contractors in South Africa [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	925
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NAVIGATION AND SHIPPING. —Copy presented, of Annual Statement of Navigation and Shipping of the United Kingdom for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	925
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TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES). —Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3390 to 3397 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	925
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PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE. —Questions to Ministers. Return relative thereto [ordered 6th June; <i>Mr. Henniker Heaton</i>] to be printed. [No. 194]	925
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THE GOVERNMENT AND THE TAXATION OF FOOD.—Questions, Mr. Black (Banffshire); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour	960
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NEW BILL.

Poor Law (Scotland) Bill.—“To amend the Law relating to the relief of the poor and to parish council administration in Scotland, and for other purposes connected therewith,” presented by the Lord-Advocate; supported by Mr. Cochrane; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, June 20th, and to be printed. [Bill 244]	960
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MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT.

<i>The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)</i>	960
<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs)</i>	963

Mr. Speaker made, and Question proposed, “That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for his distinguished services in the Chair for more than ten years; that he be assured that this House fully appreciates the zeal, ability, and impartiality with which he has discharged the duties of his high office through a period of unusual labour, difficulty, and anxiety, and the judgment and firmness with which he has maintained its privileges and dignity; and that this House feels the strongest sense of his unremitting attention to the constantly increasing business of Parliament, and the uniform urbanity and kindness which have earned for him the respect and esteem of this House.”—(Mr. A. J. Balfour.)

<i>Mr. John Redmond (Waterford)</i>	964
<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain (Birmingham, W.)</i>	966
<i>Sir Alfred Thomas (Glamorganshire, E.)</i>	967
<i>Colonel Saunderson (Armagh, N.)</i>	968
<i>Mr. Bell (Derby)</i>	969

Resolved, *Nemine Contradicente*, That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for his distinguished services in the Chair for more than ten years; that he be assured that this House fully appreciates the zeal, ability, and impartiality with which he has discharged the duties of his high office through a period of unusual labour, difficulty, and anxiety, and the judgment and firmness with which he has maintained its privileges and dignity; and that this House feels the strongest sense of his unremitting attention to the constantly increasing business of Parliament, and the uniform urbanity and kindness which have earned for him the respect and esteem of this House.

<i>Mr. Speaker</i>	972
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Resolved, “That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for what he has said this day to the House; and that the same be printed in the Votes of this day, and entered in the Journals of this House.”—(Mr. A. J. Balfour.)

Resolved, *Nemine Contradicente*, “That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying His Majesty that he will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of His royal favour upon the right

hon. William Court Gully, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in which he has with such distinguished ability and dignity presided in the Chair of this House, and assuring His Majesty that whatever expense His Majesty shall think fit to be incurred upon that account this House will make good the same.”—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty’s Household.

CHURCHES (SCOTLAND).

The Lord-Advocate (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 972

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the settlement of certain questions between the Free Church and the United Free Church in Scotland, and to make certain Amendments of the Law with respect to the Church of Scotland.”—(*The Lord-Advocate.*)

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 976

Question agreed to. Bill ordered to be brought in by The Lord-Advocate and Mr. Attorney-General.

Churches (Scotland) Bill.—“To provide for the settlement of certain questions between the Free Church and the United Free Church in Scotland, and to make certain Amendments of the Law with respect to the Church of Scotland,” presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 20th June, and to be printed. [Bill 245.]

Churches (Scotland) Bill.—Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions Private Bills do Examine the Churches (Scotland) Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*The Lord-Advocate.*)

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (WHITSUNTIDE).—

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That this House, at its rising Tomorrow, do adjourn till Tuesday, June 20th.”—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs)</i>	980
<i>The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)</i>	984
<i>Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean)</i>	990
<i>Mr. Elliot (Durham)</i>	991
<i>Mr. Robson (South Shields)</i>	997
<i>Sir Frederick Milner (Nottinghamshire, Bassettaw)</i>	998
<i>Mr. Churchill (Oldham)</i>	1000
<i>Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich)</i>	1003
<i>The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington)</i>	1009
<i>Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.)</i>	1013
<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain (Birmingham, W.)</i>	1015
<i>Mr. Ritchie (Croydon)</i>	1021
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i>	1023

<i>Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland)</i>	1025
<i>Mr. Samuel Smith (Flintshire)</i>	1028
<i>The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central)</i>	1029
<i>Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory)</i>	1030
<i>The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S)</i>	1031

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House, at its rising To-morrow, do adjourn till Tuesday 20th June."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

EVENING SITTING.

LIGHT DUES.

<i>Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange)</i>	1032
<i>Sir Willham Holland (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth)</i>	1036

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Lighting of the Coasts of the United Kingdom is a national duty, for the efficient performance of which full departmental responsibility should be assumed by the State and the cost defrayed out of moneys provided by Parliament, instead of, as now, by charges on merchant shipping."—(*Mr. Charles McArthur.*)

<i>Mr. J. F. Hope (Sheffield, Brightside)</i>	1037
<i>Mr. Houston (Liverpool, West Toxteth)</i>	1040
<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcester-shire, E.)</i>	1042
<i>Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham)</i>	1047
<i>Mr. Renwick (Newcastle-on-Tyne)</i>	1048
<i>Sir Robert Ropner (Stockton)</i>	1049

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 66 ; Noes, 62. (Division List No. 199.)

Foreign Trawlers Regulation Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

<i>Mr. Black (Banffshire)</i>	1051
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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

<i>Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham)</i>	1052
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Notice taken that forty Members were not present ; House counted, and forty Members not being present.

The House was adjourned at twenty minutes before Twelve of the clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 8TH JUNE, 1905.

BARON GRAVES.—Petition of Henry Cyth Percy, Baron Graves of Gravesend in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the election of Representative Peers for Ireland (presented on the 9th day of May last); referred to the Committee for privileges 1053

INTRODUCED.—Ernest William Baron Grimthorpe having succeeded to the title on the death of his uncle, Edmund Baron Grimthorpe, by virtue of a special remainder in a Patent, dated 17th February, 1886, was (in the usual manner) introduced 1053

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Liverpool Corporation Bill.—Read 2^a, and committed 1053

Shepton Mallet Gas Company (Electric Lighting) Bill [H.L.]; Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1053

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]—(Pudsey Corporation Tramways Order). Standing Order No. 92 considered (according to order), and dispensed with, with respect to a Petition of the Yorkshire Electric Power Company. Leave given to present the said Petition 1053

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill. Brought from the Commons 1053

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; North Sussex Gas Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to 1053

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments to be considered on Monday the 26th instant 1054

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.].—Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings before this House on the Second Reading, together with the documents deposited in the Case, returned from the Commons 1054

Rotherham, Maltby and Laughton Railway Bill; Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Heckmondwicke Improvement Bill; Andover Lighting and Power Bill; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz :—

E. Lauderdale (chairman).

E. Temple.

L. Crofton.

L. Congleton.

L. Rosmead.

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agreed to ; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday the 29th instant, at Eleven o'clock ; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 1054

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill (No. 105) ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill (No. 106). Read 1^a ; to be printed ; and referred to the Examiners 1054

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill. To be read 2^a on Monday the 26th instant. —(*The Lord Kenyon*) 1054

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION BILLS.—Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended ; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, also the time for depositing Documents relating to any Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Whitsuntide, be extended to Monday the 26th instant 1055

Educational Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Amendment reported (according to order) ; and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday the 26th instant 1055

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Amendment reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday the 26th instant 1055

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday the 26th instant 1005

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to order).—Amendments made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Monday the 26th instant 1055

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived ; and Bills to be read 3^a on Monday the 26th instant 1055

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday the 26th instant .. 1055

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SEA FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).—Report to the Secretary for Scotland of a Departmental Committee on the Sea Fisheries of Sunderland and Caithness 1056

TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3395.	Bulgaria.								
No. 3396.	Italy (Sicily).								
No. 3397.	Egypt (Alexandria)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1056

NAVIGATION AND SHIPPING.—Annual statement of navigation and shipping of the United Kingdom, for the year 1904									1056
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ARMY (SOUTH AFRICA).

1. Report of the Committee appointed by the Army Council to consider the question of sales and refunds to contractors in South Africa, together with appendices.									
2. Evidence taken before the Committee									1056

SIGHT TESTS.—Report on the sight tests used in the mercantile marine for the year ended 31st December, 1904 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 2111])									1056
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METEOROLOGICAL COMMITTEE.—Treasury Minute, dated 20th May, 1905, dealing with the constitution of the Meteorological Office									
Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table									1056

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF SURREY).—Order made by the county council of the county of Surrey altering certain polling districts in the county.									
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table									1056

CRIMINAL CASES (RESERVATION OF POINTS OF LAW) BILL [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order).									
[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]									
Clause 1.									
Lord Alverstone									1057

Amendments moved—

“ In Clause 1, page 1, line 8, after the word ‘ apply ’ to insert the words ‘ within such time as may be fixed by rules of Court ’; and in line 22, after the word ‘ section ’ to insert the words ‘ and the Court may make such order as to the custody or admission to bail of the prisoner as they think necessary. ’ ”—(Lord Alverstone.)

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to

Clause 2.

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Amendment moved—

“ In Clause 2, page 2, line 7, after the word ‘ convicted ’ to insert the words ‘ and if the Court order a retrial of the case, they may make such order as to the custody or admission to bail of the prisoner and the renewal of the recognisances of the witnesses pending the retrial as they think necessary to meet the circumstances of the case. ’ ”—
(*Lord Alverstone*.)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Lord Alverstone 1057

Amendment moved—

“ After Clause 2, to insert as a new clause the words, ‘ Where it appears to the Court on the hearing of any case stated under the Crown Cases Act, 1848, whether in pursuance of this Act or otherwise, that it is desirable that a prisoner should be represented by counsel, the Court may, if they think fit, certify that the prisoner may have legal aid, and the expenses of such legal aid may be allowed and paid in the same manner as the costs for the prosecution are paid, subject to any rules which may be made for the purpose under the Prosecution of Offences Act, 1879, and to any regulations as to the rates or scales of payment which may be made by a Secretary of State. ’ ”—(*Lord Alverstone*.)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3 agreed to.

Amendment moved—

“ After Clause 3, to insert as a new clause, the words, ‘ Rules of Court made under Section 17 of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act, 1875, may regulate generally the practice and procedure under this Act. ’ ”—(*Lord Alverstone*.)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4 agreed to.

The Lord Chancellor (The Earl of Halsbury) 1058

Amendment moved, to insert the following new clauses—

(A.) “ Where a Court of quarter sessions reserve a question of law under the Crown Cases Act, 1848, any recognisances may, subject to any rules made under Section 29 of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, be taken out of Court before any justice of the peace, or where any of the parties is in prison before the governor or other keeper of the prison, and the same consequences of law shall ensue as if the recognisances had been entered into before the Court of quarter sessions by which the question of law was reserved. ”

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(B.) "Where on the hearing and determining of a question of law with respect to which a case is stated under the Crown Cases Act, 1848, whether in pursuance of this Act or otherwise, the judgment of the Court stating the case is affirmed, any sentence of penal servitude or imprisonment on the person convicted shall begin to run, in the case of a person admitted to bail from the date of his subsequent reception into prison, and in the case of a person committed to prison under sentence and not admitted to bail from the date on which he is so committed."—(*The Lord Chancellor*.)

On Question, Amendment agreed to. Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended (No. 107).

Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, Amendment Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 1059

Advertisements Regulation Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Tuesday the 27th instant 1059

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 1059

Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland) Bill.—Third Reading (which stands appointed for this day) put off to Thursday the 29th instant 1059

Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Tuesday the 27th instant 1059

COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES.—A question having arisen as to a right to be heard at the Bar, moved that the Question be referred to the Committee of Privileges for consideration and report—(*The Lord Chancellor*), agreed to; and ordered accordingly 1059

Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill [H.L.].—Minutes of Evidence, together with an Appendix, laid upon the Table, and to be delivered out 1060

THE LOSS OF THE STEAMER "WORKFIELD."

Lord Muskerry 1060
The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Duke of Marlborough) 1063

House adjourned at five minutes past Five o'clock, to Tuesday the 20th instant, a quarter before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 8TH JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Two of the clock.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.—The Sergeant came, and brought the Mace, and laid it under the Table.

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Then Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, addressing himself to the Clerk of the House (who, standing up, pointed to him, and then sat down), acquainted the House that His Majesty, having been informed of the resignation of the right hon. William Court Gully, late Speaker of this House, gives leave to proceed forthwith to the choice of a new Speaker.

Sir M. Hicks Beach (Bristol, W.) 1065

Sir W. Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford) 1069

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the right hon. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER do take the Chair of this House as Speaker."—
(*Sir M. Hicks Beach*).

Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) 1073

Question put, and agreed to.

The House then having again unanimously called Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER to the Chair, he was taken out of his place and conducted to the Chair by Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH and Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE.

Mr. Speaker-Elect 1074

Then the Mace, which before lay under the Table, was placed on the Table.

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1075

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1076

House adjourned at a quarter of an hour before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 20TH JUNE, 1905.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.—The Right Hon. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, Speaker-Elect, presented 1077

House adjourned at a quarter past Two o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 20TH JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

The House being met, and Mr. SPEAKER-ELECT having taken the Chair;

A Message to attend the Lords Commissioners was delivered by Black Rod.

Accordingly Mr. SPEAKER-ELECT, with the House, went up to the House of Peers, where he was presented to the Lords Commissioners for the approbation of His Majesty.

Then the LORD CHANCELLOR, one of the said Commissioners, signified His Majesty's approbation of Mr. SPEAKER ELECT in the name and on behalf of His Majesty.

The House being returned—

Mr. SPEAKER reported, That the House had been to the House of Peers, where His Majesty was pleased by His Majesty's Commissioners to approve of the choice the House had made of him to be their Speaker.. 1078

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Shepton Mallet Gas Company (Electric Lighting) Bill [LORDS].—Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [Lords.] Read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1079

Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time ; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 246] .. 1079

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill without Amendments.

Birmingham Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, “ An Act to amend Section eighty-two of The Bills of Exchange Act, 1882.” [Bills of Exchange Act, 1882. Amendment Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, “ An Act to extend Section eighty-six of The Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877.” [Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) (No. 1) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled “ An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Aberystwyth Gas, Haslemere Gas, Hayling Island Gas, Sandiacre Gas, and Stanford-le-Hope Gas.” [Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “ An Act to empower the Shepton Mallet Gas Company to supply electricity within their limits of gas supply.” [Shepton Mallet Gas Company (Electric Lighting) Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, “ An Act to provide for the licensing and control of hospitals for disease for the notification of tuberculosis ; and to make other provisions for the health of the Sandgate Urban District ; and for other purposes.” [Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. .. 1079

PETITIONS.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL.—Petition from Walsall, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 1080

COUNTY COURTS BILL.—Petition from Walsall, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 1080

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FALSE STATEMENTS (COMPANIES) BILL.—Petitions in favour ; from Huddersfield and Walsall ; to lie upon the Table	1080
LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).—Petition from Liverpool, for alteration of Law ; to lie upon the Table	1080
LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.—Petition from Wandsworth, against ; to lie upon the Table	1080
LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.—Petition from Woolwich, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	1080
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS ASSOCIATION BILL.—Petition from Wandsworth, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	1080
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY BILL.—Petition from Walsall, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	1080
MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (COMPANIES) BILL.—Petition from Walsall, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	1080
MORTGAGE OF PREMISES BILL.—Petition from Walsall, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	1080
POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).—Petition from Grimsby, for Annulment ; to lie upon the Table	1080
PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.—Petition from Walsall, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	1080
RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.—Petition from Walsall, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	1081
REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.—Petition from Walsall, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	1081
STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.—Petition from Huddersfield, against ; to lie upon the Table	1081
TRADE MARKS BILL.—Petition from Walsall, in favour ; to lie upon the Table ..	1081
WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT (1897) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition from Walsall, against ; to lie upon the Table	1081

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (WHITSUNTIDE RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Whitsuntide Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896.—

1. Trade Reports (Annual Series). Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3398 to 3409.

2. Treaty Series (No. 16, 1905). Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Switzerland supplementing Article XVIII. of the Treaty of Extradition of 26th November, 1880. Signed at London, 29th June, 1904.

3. Sugar Convention (Commercial, No. 3, 1905). Copy of Report of British Delegate at the International Sugar Commission, Spring Session, 1905, and Correspondence.

4. Colonial Reports (Annual). Copy of Colonial Report, No. 448 (St. Helena, Annual Report for 1904.

5. Land Settlement Colonies. Copy of Report on the Salvation Army Colonies in the United States and at Hadleigh, England, with Scheme of National Land Settlement, by Commissioner, H. Rider-Haggard.

6. London Unemployed Fund ; Copy of Preliminary Statement (as on the 14th April, 1905) prepared at the request of the President of the Local Government Board by the Central Executive Committee.

7. Mercantile Marine (Sight Tests). Copy of Report to the Secretary of the Board of Trade upon the Sight Tests used in the Mercantile Marine for the year ended 31st December, 1904.

8. Factories and Workshops. Copy of Report of the Chief Inspector for 1904. Part I. Reports.

9. Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission). Copy of Report on the Manuscripts of the Earl of Egmont. Vol. I. Part II.

10. Meteorological Committee. Copy of Treasury Minute, dated 20th May, 1905, dealing with the constitution of the Meteorological Office.

11. Board of Education. Copy of Regulations for the Training of Teachers and for the Examination of Students in Training Colleges.

12. Churches (Scotland) Bill. Copy of Return of Extracts from Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland relating to the Church of Scotland passed in the years 1690, 1693, and 1707, showing the repeals in the Acts of 1693 and 1707 proposed by the Churches (Scotland) Bill.

13. Sea Fisheries (Scotland). Copy of Report to the Secretary for Scotland of a Departmental Committee on the Sea Fisheries of Sutherland and Caithness.

14. Education (Scotland). Copy of Thirty-second Annual Report by the Accountant for Scotland to the Scotch Education Department.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table 1083

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904-5 (STATEMENT ON PROGRAMME OF SHIPBUILDING, ETC.).—

Copy presented, of Statement showing probable effect on the Programme of Shipbuilding Reconstruction, Repairs, Maintenance, etc., due to the Re-appropriation of Cash Provision, etc. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 195] 1083

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).—Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 449 (Falkland Islands, Annual Report for 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1083

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GRADUATED INCOME-TAX.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 11th August, 1904; <i>Mr. Herbert Samuel</i>]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 196]	1083
LEAD POISONING IN EARTHENWARE AND CHINA WORKS.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 1st June; <i>Mr. Cochrane</i>]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 197]	1083
POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF SURREY).—Copy presented, of order made by the County Council of the County of Surrey, altering certain Polling Districts in the County [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	1083
POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY BOROUGH OF NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE).—Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Newcastle-upon-Tyne dividing certain Wards of the Borough into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	1083
MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (INCORPORATION OF MERTHYR TYDFIL).—Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Merthyr Tydfil, dated 6th June, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	1083
IRISH LAND COMMISSION.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 16th May; <i>Mr. Delany</i>]; to lie upon the Table	1083
INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland appointing the places at which Examinations for 1905 shall be held [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	1084
INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland determining the maximum number of Centre Superintendents to be appointed for the Examinations in 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	1084
INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland constituting an additional centre of Examination at Newtownbarry for 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	1084
BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Copy presented, of Regulations for Evening Schools, Technical Institutions, and Schools of Art and Art Classes, from 1st August, 1905, to 31st July, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1084
INCOME-TAX (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).—Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee on Income-Tax, together with an Appendix and Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1084
LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.—Copy presented, of Returns relating to the Council up to 31st March, 1905, with Estimate of Expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 198]	1084
TRADE REPORTS.—Copy presented, of Index to Reports of His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Representatives Abroad on Trade and Subjects of General Interest (with Appendix), 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1084

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RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.—Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the three-months ended 31st December, 1904, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into. Part II., Reports on Accidents [by Command]; to lie upon the Table .. 1084

EAST INDIA (ARMY ADMINISTRATION).—Copy presented, of Correspondence regarding the Administration of the Army in India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1085

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3410 to 3413 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1085

NAVY (HYDROGRAPHERS' REPORT).—Copy presented, of Report on Admiralty Surveys for the year 1904 by the Hydrographer [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1085

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Inquiry into Charities (County of Wilts). Further Return relative thereto [ordered 9th August, 1901; *Mr. Griffith Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 199.]

2. County Court Rules. Copy of County Court Rules, dated 7th June, 1905 [by Act] 1085

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT (KING'S ANSWER TO ADDRESS).—Mr. A. J. BALFOUR acquainted the House that their Address of Wednesday, the 7th day of this instant June, to His Majesty, praying His Majesty "that He will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of His Royal Favour upon the right hon. William Court Gully, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in which he has with such distinguished ability and dignity presided in the Chair of this House; and to assure His Majesty that whatever expense His Majesty may think proper to incur on that account this House will make good the same," has been presented to His Majesty; and His Majesty has been pleased to receive the same very graciously, and has commanded him to acquaint this House that His Majesty is desirous, in compliance with the wishes of His faithful Commons, to confer upon the said right hon. William Court Gully some signal mark of His Royal Favour; but, as the same cannot be effectually granted and secured without the concurrence of Parliament, His Majesty recommends to the House of Commons the adoption of such measures as may be necessary for the accomplishment of this purpose.

Committee to consider His Majesty's Most Gracious Answer, To-morrow.—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) 1085

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—Public Accounts. That they give leave to Sir Henry Graham, Clerk of the Parliaments, to attend in order to his being examined as a witness before the Committee of Public Accounts 1086

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

GAMBLING IN FUTURES, ETC.—INSTRUCTIONS TO DELEGATES AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	1086
THE ALIENS BILL.—Question, Mr. Middlemore (Birmingham, N.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	1087
COMPLETION OF BOAT SLIP AT GLEN, COUNTY KERRY.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1087
EXPORT OF EGGS, BUTTER, CREAMERY, HOGS—CATTLE, AND OATS FROM CANADA TO UNITED KINGDOM.—Question, Mr. Bright (Shropshire, Oswestry); Answer, Mr. Bonar Law	1087
CUTTING OF HAIR OF MR. JOSEPH FOX IN DURHAM GAOL.—Question, Mr. Pike Pease (Darlington); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	1088
CHARGE OF FELONY AGAINST AN EAST END BEERHOUSE LICENSEE.—Question, Mr. John Burns (Battersea); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	1089
SUGGESTED INCREASE OF MAXIMUM WAGE FOR DARLINGTON POSTMEN.—Question, Mr. Pike Pease; Answer, Lord Stanley	1089
CONVEYANCE OF AFTERNOON MAILS FROM LONDONDERRY TO ENGLAND.—Question, Dr. Thompson (Monaghan, N.); Answer, Lord Stanley	1090
EXPENDITURE ON ADMIRALTY BUILDINGS.—Question, Sir Henry Fowler (Southampton, E.); Answer, Lord Balcarras	
RISK OF COMMUNICATING GLANDERS TO HUMAN BEINGS.—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour	1091
ASSESSMENT OF LICENSED PREMISES.—Question, Mr. Leif Jones (Westmoreland, Appleby); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain	1092
SALE OF SALT IN INDIAN NATIVE STATES.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Brodrick	1093
EVICTED RYOTS IN THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Brodrick	1094
SALES OF IRISH LAND—TRINITARY COLLEGE LEASES.—Question, Mr. Lonsdale (Armagh, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1095
DROGHEDA PLAGUE INSPECTIONS—CLAIM OF DR. O'KEEFE.—Question, Mr. Nolan (Lough, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1095
CLOSE TIME FOR IRISH FISHERIES.—Question, Colonel McCalmont (Antrim, E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1096
GRAZING LANDS ON LORD TRIMLESTOWN'S FARM, COUNTY ROSCOMMON.—Question, Mr. Hayden (Roscommon, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1097

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ARDEE UNION DISPENSARY DISTRICTS.—Question, Mr. Nolan ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1097
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MILITIA AND VOLUNTEER SUBMARINE MINING DIVISIONS.—Question, Mr. Kearley (Devonport) ; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1098
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QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONFERENCE AND THE MATCH TRADE.—Questions, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) ; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's)	1098
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MEDICAL AND DENTIST'S REGISTER.—Questions, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) ; Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	1099
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COUNTY COURT JUDGESHIPS.—Question, Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea District) ; Answer, The Financial Secretary of the Treasury (Mr. Victor Cavendish, Derbyshire, W.)	
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MORAY FIRTH FISHERIES.—Question, Mr. Weir ; Answer, The Lord-Advocate (Mr. Scott-Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton)	1101
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CAITHNESS CROFTERS GRIEVANCE.—Question, Mr. Weir ; Answer, Mr. Scott-Dickson	1101
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LOANS TO SCOTTISH FISHERMAN.—Question, Mr. Weir ; Answer, Mr. Scott-Dickson	
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THE MILITARY STORES REPORT.—Questions, Mr. Whitley (Halifax), Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Sir James Woodhouse (Huddersfield), Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs), Mr. Arnold-Forster, Mr. John Morley (Montrose Burghs), Mr. Blake (Longford, S.), Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis), Mr. Tennant (Berwickshire), Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs), Mr. Crooks (Woolwich), Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny), Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) ; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.), The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)	1102
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THE "ST. KILDA."—Questions, Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange), and Mr. Gibson Bowles ; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour	1113
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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, and Sir Charles Dilke ; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour	1114
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Unemployed Workmen Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.	
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<i>The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central)</i>	1114
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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

<i>Sir George Bartley (Islington, N.)</i>	1128
<i>Mr. Whitmore (Chelsea)</i>	1149

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Amendment proposed—

“To leave out all the words after the word ‘That,’ to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, ‘it is most inexpedient for the national welfare, contrary to the best interests of the State, and especially detrimental to the poor themselves, by tending to reduce their self-reliance and independence, that a system of relief, whether supported by municipal rates or Imperial taxation, be established in addition to and outside the existing Poor Law.’”—(*Sir George Bartley.*)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

<i>Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar)</i>	..	..	..	1152
<i>Mr. H. Lawson (Tower Hamlets, Mile End)</i>	..	..	..	1158
<i>Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester)</i>	..	..	..	1162
<i>Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford)</i>	..	..	..	1165
<i>Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil)</i>	..	..	..	1170

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Unemployed Workmen Bill.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [20th June], “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Which Amendment was.

“To leave out all the words after the word ‘That,’ to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, ‘it is most inexpedient for the national welfare, contrary to the best interests of the State, and especially detrimental to the poor themselves by tending to reduce their self-reliance and independence, that a system of relief, whether supported by municipal rates or Imperial taxation, be established in addition to and outside the existing Poor Law.’”—(*Sir George Bartley.*)

Question again proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

<i>Mr. Keir Hardie</i>	..	..	..	..	1175
<i>Sir Francis Powell (Wigan)</i>	..	..	..	..	1180
<i>Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland)</i>	..	..	..	..	1185
<i>Mr. Bond (Nottinghamshire, E.)</i>	..	..	..	..	1186
<i>The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.)</i>	..	..	..	..	1188
<i>Mr. Crooks (Woolwich)</i>	..	..	..	..	1194
<i>Sir Frederick Banbury (Camberwell, Peckham)</i>	..	..	..	..	1199

Mr. CROOKS rose in his place, and claimed to move, “That the Question be now put.”

Question, “That the Question be now put,” put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 228 ; Noes, 11. (Division List No. 200.)

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR claimed, "That the main Question be now put."

Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE.—Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire as to the provision of means of escape from fire in factories, workshops, laundries, offices, shops, hotels, and other buildings where persons work or live in large numbers, and to report what changes in the law are necessary for the protection of life, having special regard to the case of buildings in the occupation of more than one occupier.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Arkwright, Mr. James Bailey, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. Vincent Kennedy, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Norman, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Soames, and Mr. Tuff.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) 1203

NEW CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The Parliamentary Secretary of the Treasury (*Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington*) 1204

Question, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty-seven minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 21ST JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Croydon Corporation Bill ; Stockport Corporation Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to 1205

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 1205

Barry Railway Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment. 1205

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Clacton Improvement Bill [LORDS]; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]; —Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments	1205
Metropolitan Railway Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment	1205
North British Railway (General Powers) Bill. —Read the third time, and passed	1205
Rathmines and Rathgar Extension and Improvement Bill. —To be read the third time To-morrow	1205
Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill. — —Read the third time, and passed. [New Title]	1205
London County Council (Money) Bill ; South Eastern and London, Chat- ham, and Dover Railways Bills [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time	1205
Barrymore Estate Bill [LORDS]; Donovan's Divorce Bill [Lords]; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed	1205
Millport Piers and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. —Read a second time; to be considered upon Friday	1205
Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill ; Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords]; Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	1206
Leven's Patent Bill [LORDS].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table Bill to be read the third time	1206
Darien Gold Mining Company Bill LORDS]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table Bill to be read the third time	1206

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL. —Petition from Abernethy, for alteration; to lie upon the Table	1206
LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL. —Petition from Camberwell, in favour; to lie upon the Table	1206
VACCINATION BILL. —Petition from St. Marylebone, against; to lie upon the Table	1206
BRITISH MUSEUM. —Petition of the Trustees of the British Museum, for grant in aid [presented February 28th]; referred to the Committee of Supply.— (<i>Mr. John Morley</i>)	1206

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Report of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1206
BOARD OF EDUCATION (CODE, 1905).—Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools, with Schedules, by the Board of Education, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1206
BOARD OF EDUCATION.—Copy presented, of Order amending Final Order, No. 1130, made under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1207
FINANCE ACCOUNTS.—Copy presented, of Finance Accounts of the United Kingdom for the year ended March 31st, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 200]	1207
CIVIL LIST PENSIONS.—Copy presented, of List of all Pensions granted during the year ended March 31st, 1905, and payable under the provisions of Section 9 (1) of The Civil List Act, 1901 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [Oo. 201] .. —	1207
PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.—Local Loans Fund. Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Local Loans Fund for the year ended March 31st, 1904, with report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 202]	1207
NEW WRITS.—For Borough of Finsbury (East Division), in the room of Henry Charles Richards, esquire, deceased; County of Stafford (Kingswinford Division), Colonel William George Webb, deceased.—(<i>Sir A. Acland Hood</i>) ..	1207
 <i>QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.</i>	
INCOME-TAX COMMITTEE—PUBLICATION OF REPORT.—Question, Mr. J. S. C. Lewis (Flint Boroughs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	1207
SCOTTISH BOARD OF MANUFACTURERS—PENDING LEGISLATION.—Question, Sir J. Stirling-Maxwell (Glasgow College); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson ..	1208
FISHERY BOARD CRUISERS AND ILLEGAL TRADING OFF THE ISLE OF LEWES.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromerty); Answer, Mr. Scott-Dickson ..	1208
ERECTION OF HOUSES OF FARM OF AIGNISH, ISLAND OF LEWES.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Scott-Dickson	1208
DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION OF CANTON-KAWLOON RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Earl Percy	1208
PROGRESS IN BUILDING OF CANTON-HANKOW RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Earl Percy	1209
WOOLACOMBE (NORTH DEVON) WATER SUPPLY.—Question, Mr. Griffith Boscawen (Kent, Tunbridge); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour	1209

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ARMY PENSIONS—CASE OF WILLIAM SIMMONDS, LATE OF ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY —Question, Mr. Charles Hobbhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Mr. Arnold- Forster	12 10
GOVERNMENT REDISTRIBUTION PROPOSALS.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	1210
THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE-GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	1211

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

ROYALTY PAYABLE BY THE HYDERABAD (DECCAN) COMPANY.—Question, Sir Mancherjee Bhownagjee (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford)	1211
MOTOR-CAR HORNS AND SUNDAY SERVICE.—Question, Captain Ellice (St. Andrews Burghs); Answer, President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central)	1212
THE MILITARY STORES REPORT.—Questions, Mr. Whitley (Halifax), Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N), Mr. Keir-Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil), Lough (Islington, W.), Mr. Labouchere (Northampton), Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. Blake (Longford, S.), Mr. Churchill (Oldham), Mr. Reddy (King's County, Birr), Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean), Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.), Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.), Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs), Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice (Wiltshire, Cricklade), and Mr. John Morley (Montrose Burghs); Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.), The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.), Mr. Walter Long (Bristol, S.), and The Attorney-General (Sir Robert Finlay, Inverness Burghs)	1212

NEW BILLS,

Revenue Bill. —"To amend the Law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue; and for other purposes connected with Finance," presented by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 247.]	1225
Judicature and Development Grant (Ireland) Bill. —"To augment the Ireland Development Grant by means of the abolition of two Judgeships and the reduction of the salary of the Lord Chancellor and the transfer of certain accumulations, and to make provision with respect to the application of portion of that Grant," presented by Mr. Walter Long; supported by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 248]	1225

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON, upon the Motion of Mr. A. J. Balfour, took the Chair as
Chairman of Ways and Means.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.—CLASS I.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That a sum, not exceeding £22,000, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for constructing a new Harbour of Refuge at Peterhead.”

Whereupon Motion made, and Question, “ That the Chairman do report Progress and ask leave to sit again ”—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*),—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow 1225

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT (KING'S ANSWER TO ADDRESS, 7TH JUNE).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[*MR. GRANT LAWSON* (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair].

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That the annual sum of £4,000 net be granted to His Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the said annuity to commence and take effect upon the day upon which the right hon. William Court Gully, late Speaker of the House of Commons, ceased to hold the office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to be settled in the most beneficial manner upon, and to continue during the life of, him the said right hon. William Court Gully.”—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*.)

Mr. Keir Hardie (*Me:thyr Tydvil*) 1226

Amendment proposed—

“ To leave out ‘ £4,000,’ and insert ‘ £1,000.’ ”—(*Mr. Keir Hardie*.)

Question put, “ That ‘ £4,000 ’ stand part of the Question.”

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 245 ; Noes, 17. (Division List No. 201.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.—Order for Committee read.

The Secretary of State for India (*Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford*) .. 1229

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on East India Revenue Accounts).”

Sir Henry Fowler (*Wolverhampton, E.*) 1248

Lord George Hamilton (*Middlesex, Ealing*) 1256

Mr. Haldane (*Haddingtonshire*) 1262

Mr. Cathcart Wason (*Orkney and Shetland*) 1267

Mr. Samuel Smith (*Flintshire*) 1270

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out from the word ‘That,’ to the end of the Question, and add the words ‘considering the great importance of Indian questions and the desire of the Indian people to lay their grievances before Parliament and to ask for improvement in the administration of their country, it is absolutely necessary, in the interests alike of India and the United Kingdom, that periodical Parliamentary inquiries into the administration of India be revived, that the salary of the Secretary of State for India be placed upon the British Estimates, and that greater opportunities be given for the Parliamentary discussion of Indian affairs.’”—(*Mr. Cathcart Wason.*)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

<i>Major Evans Gordon (Tower Hamlets, Stepney)</i>	..	..	..	..	1277
<i>Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.)</i>	..	..	..	..	1283

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned until this Evening’s Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [21st June], “That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on East India Revenue Accounts).”

Which Amendment was—

“To leave out from the word ‘That,’ to the end of the Question, and add the words ‘considering the great importance of Indian questions and the desire of the Indian people to lay their grievances before Parliament and to ask for improvement in the administration of their country, it is absolutely necessary, in the interests alike of India and the United Kingdom, that periodical Parliamentary inquiries into the administration of India be revived, that the salary of the Secretary of State for India be placed upon the British Estimates, and that greater opportunities be given for the Parliamentary discussion of Indian affairs.’”—(*Mr. Cathcart Wason.*)

Question again proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

<i>Mr. Herbert Roberts</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	1285
<i>Sir Mansherjee Bhownaggee (Bethnal Green, N.E.)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	1288
<i>Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	1305
<i>Sir J. Ferguson (Manchester, N.E.)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	1311
<i>Mr. Brodrick</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	1313
<i>Mr. Emmott (Oldham)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	1317

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 116 ; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 202.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it appears from the Accounts presented to Parliament that in 1903-4 the Revenue of India amounted to £83,756,155, the Expenditure charged against Revenue to £80,759,755, and the Capital Expenditure not charged to Revenue to £5,043,003.—(*Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*)

Resolution to be reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That this House do now adjourn.”
—(*Sir Acland-Hood.*)

<i>Major Seely (Isle of Wight)</i>	1322
<i>Mr. Whitley (Halifax)</i>	1324
<i>The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (Sir A. Acland-Hood, Somersetshire, Wellington)</i>	1324
<i>Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield)</i>	1324

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS : THURSDAY, 22ND JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords]; Formby Township Bill [Lords]; Blackpool Improvement Bill [Lords]; Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [Lords]; Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [Lords]; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1325

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO NOT COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the follow-

ing Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have not been complied with, viz. :—Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 1325

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Pier and Harbour Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 1325

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (LORDS) (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 2) Bill [Lords] ; Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [Lords] ; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords] ; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time to-morrow 1326

Churches (Scotland) Bill (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred pursuant to the Order of the House of the 7th day of June, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz. :—Churches (Scotland) Bill 1326

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill (CHANGED FROM "GREAT NORTHERN (IRELAND) AND MIDLAND RAILWAYS BILL").—As amended, considered ; Amendments made ; Bill to be read the third time 1326

Rhymney Railway Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered ; Amendments made ; Bill to be read the third time 1326

Donovan's Divorce Bill [LORDS].—Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with the documents deposited in the case of Donovan's Divorce Bill [Lords].—(Mr. Attorney-General.)

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills, that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Donovan's Divorce Bill [Lords], and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill, if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(Mr. Attorney-General.) 1326

PETITIONS.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.—Petition from Edinburgh, in favour ; to lie upon the Table 1327

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.—Return [presented June 20th] to be printed. [No. 203]	1327
MINT.—Copy presented, of Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the Deputy-Master and Comptroller of the Mint, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ..	1327
RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords], and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158b]; referred to the Committee on the Bill..	1327
TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3414 and 3415 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1327

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE UNION BETWEEN NORWAY AND SWEDEN.—Question, Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.); Answer, Earl Percy	1328
MEMORIAL OF OFFICERS OF DUBLIN AND QUEENSTOWN TRAVELLING POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Lord Stanley..	1328
SITE OF STATUTE OF LATE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.—Question, Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland); Answer, Lord Balcarras	1328
ALLEGED CANING OF CHILDREN IN PRESTON FOR NON-PAYMENT OF SCHOOL FEES.—Question, Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University); Answer, Sir William Anson	1329
ESCAPE FROM FIRE COMMITTEE—LONDON BUILDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL AND THE CITY OF LONDON (ESCAPE FROM FIRE) BILL.—Question, Mr. John Burns (Battersea); Answer, Mr. Akers-Douglas	1329
ANNUAL LEAVE OF ABSTRACTION CLERKS.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish	1330
SENTENCE OF IMPRISONMENT ON THE CHAUKIDAR MAHABIR.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. Brodirck	1330
PERMANENT APPOINTMENT OF A THIRD JUDGE FOR THE PROVINCE OF OUDH.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. Brodrick	1331
ALLENS HILL SCHOOL, COUNTY ARMAGH.—Questions, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long.. .. .	1332

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

H.M.S. "EMERALD."—Questions, Captain Donelan (Cork, E.); Answers, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyma, Suffolk, Woodbridge)	1333
SOUTH AFRICAN WAR STORES—FORTNIGHTLY REPORTS.—Questions, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.), and Sir Robert Reed (Dumfries Burghs); Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.).. ..	1333

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COST OF SOLD STORES.—Questions, Mr. J. A. Pease (Essex, Saffron Walden) : Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean), and Mr. Whitley (Halifax) ; Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1334
THE WAR OFFICE AND COLONEL MORGAN'S LIBEL ACTIONS.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.), Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.), Mr. Labouchere (Northampton), Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) ; Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1336
SURPLUS STORES OFFERED FOR SALE AT BERMUDA, BARBADOS, ST. HELENA, AND WOOLWICH.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh ; Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster ..	1337
REPORT OF BUTLER'S COMMITTEE—OFFICERS RELIEVED FROM DUTY.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh, and Mr. Pirie ; Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1337
PRESS CENSORSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Whitley ; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1338
THE WAR SECRETARY'S PREFACE TO THE BUTLER REPORT.—Question, Mr. Whitley ; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1338
LOCAL CONTRACTING SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Questions, Mr. Whitley ; Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1340
THE MILITARY STORES REPORT—PROPOSED ROYAL COMMISSION.—Questions, Mr. J. H. Lewis (Flint Boroughs), Mr. Blake (Longford, S.) ; Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)	1340
POWERS OF ROYAL COMMISSIONS.—Questions, Sir Robert Reed (Dumfries Burghs), Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice (Wiltshire, Criclade), Mr. Blake, Major Seely (Isle of Wight), Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. MacVeagh, Mr. Whitley, Sir Charles Dilke, and Mr. John O'Connor (Kildare, N.) ; Answers, The Attorney-General Sir Robert Finlay (Inverness Burghs) and Mr. A. J. Balfour	1342
THE VOTE OF CENSURE.—Question, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman ; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour	1348
DELAY IN DELIVERY OF NEW FIELD GUNS FOR INDIA.—Questions, Sir Charles Dilke ; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1348
BREAD CONTRACTS FOR IRISH TROOPS.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory), and Mr. MacVeagh ; Answers, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield)	1350
PRIVATE USE OF REGIMENTAL HORSES.—Questions, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green) ; Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1350
ANGLO-NEWFOUNDLAND DEVELOPMENT COMPANY, LIMITED.—Questions, Mr. Trevelyan (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland), Mr. Whitley, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough), Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland), Sir John Brunner (Cheshire, Northwich), Mr. Blake, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) ; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Lyttelton, Warwick and Leamington)	1350

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THE CONGO COMMISSION OF INQUIRY.—DR. BACCARI'S REPORT.—Question, Mr. Emmott (Oldham); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.)	1353
SMOKELESS COAL IN BRITISH NORTH BORNEO.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Earl Percy	1354
WAGES OF FOREIGN SEAMEN ON BRITISH SHIPS.—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's)	1354
SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY—CARRIAGE LIGHTING.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars)	1354
SCHOOL TEACHERS' HOUSES.—Question, Sir W. Hart Dyke (Kent, Dartford); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University)	1355
ROBERT SMITH'S ESTATE.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh; Answers, The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry, N.)	1355
IRISH BOARDS.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh and Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.)	1357
SIR DOUGLAS BROOKE'S SPEECH.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1357
IRISH LAND PURCHASE—NEGOTIATION FEES.—Question, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1358
KINVARA ESTATE, COUNTY GALWAY.—Question, Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1358
MALLOW URBAN COUNCIL AUDIT.—Question, Mr. William Abraham (Cork County, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1359
IMPERIAL YEOMANRY AT INNISKILLEN.—Questions, Mr. MacVeagh and Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answers, Mr. Walter Long	1360
A DYING VOTER AT FINTORA.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1360
IRISH TOWNS AND THE NEW MARINE POST OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, The Postmaster-General (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton)	1361
IRISH SORTERS AND THE NEW MARINE POST OFFICE.—Questions, Captain Donelan and Mr. Nannetti; Answers, Lord Stanley	1361

NEW BILL.

Foreign Ships (Statutory Requirements).—Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Foreign Ships (Statutory Requirements), in Session 1904, be referred to the Select Committee on Foreign Ships (Statutory Requirements).—(Mr. Bonar Law)	1363
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SUPPLY [11TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.—CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That a sum, not exceeding £10,633, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of His Majesty’s Secretary for Scotland and Subordinate Office, Expenses under the Inebriates Acts, 1897 to 1900, and Expenses under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, including a Grant in Aid of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Fund.”

Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 1363

Motion made and Question proposed, “That a sum, not exceeding £10,533, be granted for the said Service.”—(*Mr. Weir.*)

Mr. John Dewar (Inverness) 1367

Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) 1371

Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs) 1373

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.) 1375

Mr. Leveson-Gower (Sutherland) 1380

Capt. Ellice (St. Andrew’s Burghs) 1381

Mr. Ainsworth (Argyllshire) 1381

The Lord Advocate (Mr. Scott-Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) 1383

Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs) 1389

Sir Charles Renshaw (Renfrew, W.) 1393

Mr. Asher (Elgin Burghs) 1394

Mr. Black (Banffshire) 1396

Mr. Herbert Maxwell (Wigtonshire) 1397

Mr. Dobbie (Ayr Burghs) 1398

Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.) 1398

Mr. Weir 1399

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 87 ; Noes, 142. (Division List No. 203.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Munro Ferguson (Leith Burghs) 1401

Motion made, and Question put, “That a sum, not exceeding £10,133 be granted for the said Service.”—(*Mr. Munro Ferguson.*)

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 82 ; Noes, 140. (Division List No. 204.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next ; Committee to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [11TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.—CLASS II.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That a sum, not exceeding £9,905, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board for Scotland (8 and 9 Vic., c. 83 ; 52 and 53 Vic., c. 50 ; 57 and 58 Vic., c. 58 ; 60 and 61 Vic., c. 38 ; and various other statutes).”

Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan, Kinross) 1404

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That a sum, not exceeding £9,805, be granted for the said Service.”—(*Mr. Eugene Wason.*)

<i>Mr. Munro Ferguson</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1405
<i>Mr. Maconochie (Aberdeenshire, E.)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1408
<i>Mr. Black</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1409
<i>Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart (Renfrew, E.)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1410
<i>Mr. Findlay (Lanarkshire, N.E.)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1411
<i>Mr. John Wilson (Glasgow, St. Rollox)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1412
<i>Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1412
<i>Mr. Charles Douglas (Lanarkshire, N.W.)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1414
<i>Mr. Keir-Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil)</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1415
<i>Mr. Scott-Dickson</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1416
<i>Mr. Caldwell</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1419
<i>Mr. Scott-Dickson</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1429
<i>Mr. Munro Ferguson</i>	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1422

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 59 ; Noes, 114. (Division List No. 205.)

Original Question put, and agreed to:

CLASS IV.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “ That a sum, not exceeding £1,047,290 be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for Public Education in Scotland, and for Science and Art in Scotland, including a Grant in Aid.”

Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 1425

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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,047,190 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. McCrae*.)

<i>Sir Andrew Agnew (Edinburgh, S.)</i>	1427
<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i>	1428
<i>Mr. Haldane (Haddingtonshire)</i>	1428
<i>Mr. Parker Smith (Lanarkshire, Partick)</i>	1429
<i>Mr. Scott-Dickson</i>	1429

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT (KING'S ANSWER TO ADDRESS, JUNE 7TH).

Resolution reported.

"That the annual sum of £4,000 net be granted to His Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the said annuity to commence and take effect upon the day upon which the right hon. William Court Gully, late Speaker of the House of Commons, ceased to hold the office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to be settled in the most beneficial manner upon, and to continue during the life of, him the said right hon. William Court Gully."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Victor Cavendish 1431

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT BILL.—"To settle and secure an annuity upon the right hon. William Court Gully in consideration of his eminent services," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 249] 1432

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn"—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*)—put, and agreed to 1432

Adjourned at four minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 23RD JUNE, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Birmingham Corporation Bill; Brentwood Gas Bill.—Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to 1433

Millport Piers and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next 1433

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Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.)

Bill [LORDS]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed 1433

RAILWAYS BILL (GROUP 8).—Mr. ASHTON reported from the Committee on Group 8 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned until Thursday, 29th June, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 1433

PETITIONS.

COUNTY COURTS BILL.—Petition of the Association of Trade Protection Societies of the United Kingdom, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1433

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Bourbie and other places, against; to lie upon the Table 1433

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition of the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1433

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT (1901) AMENDMENT BILL.—Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1434

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (IRELAND) BILL.—Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1434

POOR LAW AREAS.—Petition from Royal and other Burghs of Scotland, for alteration; of Law; to lie upon the Table 1434

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.—Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, against; to lie upon the Table 1434

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN INDIA).—Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in India, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on March 31st, 1905, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 204.] 1434

TREATY SERIES (No. 17, 1905).—Copy presented, of Paper relating to the Accession of New Zealand to the Additional Act of the Industrial Property Convention, dated December 14th, 1900; and to the Accession of Ceylon to the Convention of 1883 as modified by the Additional Act of December 14th, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1434

DOGS REGULATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1865.—Account presented, of the Receipts and Expenditure under the Act for the year 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 205] 1434

FINES, ETC. (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of Fines; accounted for by the Registrar of Petty Session; Clerks for 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 206]	1434
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1. Richmond Bridge, Cash Account for the year 1903 [by Act].	
2. Richmond Bridge. Cash Account for the year 1904 [by Act].	1435

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

REPORTED EXPULSION OF EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN TRADERS FROM PORT ARTHUR.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Earl Percy	1435
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TRANSMISSION OF LETTERS TO VILLAGES NEAR SANDWICH.—Question, Mr. Marks (Kent, Thanet); Answer, Lord Stanley	1435
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IRISH POSTAL OFFICIALS—DUTIES AND PAY.—Questions, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answer, Lord Stanley	1435
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POSTAL OFFICIALS AND TRADE SOCIETIES.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Lord Stanley	1436
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COUNTY COURT (No. 2) BILL—LIVERPOOL COURT OF PASSAGE.—Question, Mr. Harwood-Banner (Liverpool, Everton); Answer, Sir Robert Finlay	1437
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PROMOTION OF ASSISTANT CLERKS IN THE DUBLIN OFFICE, DUBLIN.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	1437
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IRISH NATIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION.—SPECIAL INSPECTORS OF IRISH.—Question, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell (Kerry, W.); Answer, Mr. Walter Long	
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CONTRABAND OF WAR—IMPRISONMENT OF CREW OF STEAMER "FRANKLYN."—Question, Mr. Nannetti; Answer, Mr. Lyttelton	1438
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CRICKET GROUND AND GYMNASIUM FOR TROOPS ON SALISBURY PLAIN.—Question, Major Seely (Isle of Wight); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster	1339
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Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill.—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.	
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Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Major Seely (Isle of Wight) 1439

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Major Seely.*)

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Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

<i>Sir J. Fergusson (Manchester, N.E.)</i>		1442
<i>Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee)</i>	.. .. .	1443
<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcester-shire, E.)</i>	.. .. .	1448
<i>Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.)</i>	.. .. .	1452
<i>Lord Henry Bentinck (Nottingham, S.)</i>	.. .. .	1455
<i>Mr. Labouchere (Northampton)</i>	.. .. .	1456
<i>Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth)</i>	.. .. .	1458
<i>Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston)</i>	.. .. .	1459
<i>The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Bromley Davenport, Cheshire, Macclesfield)</i>	.. .. .	1460
<i>Mr. Bond (Nottingham, E.)</i>	.. .. .	1461
<i>Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.)</i>	.. .. .	1462
<i>Mr. Whitley (Halifax)</i>	.. .. .	1464
<i>The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.)</i>	.. .. .	1466
<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouthshire, N.)</i>	.. .. .	1472
<i>Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield)</i>	.. .. .	1473

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 126 ; Noes, 89. (Division List No. 206.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

INDIA LOANS (RAILWAYS).

Considered in Committee.

[Mr. HARDY (Kent, Ashford) upon the Motion of Mr. A. J. Balfour, took the Chair as Deputy-Chairman.]

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise in the United Kingdom on the security of the Revenues of India, by the creation and issue of capital stock, bonds, debentures, or bills, a sum not exceeding £20,000,000, for the following purposes—

(a) The construction, extension, and equipment of railways in India by State Agency or through the Agency of Companies.

(b) The repayment of the principal of any bonds or debentures issued by any such company under the guarantee of the Secretary of State.

(c) The discharge of any obligation incurred by the Secretary of State by reason of the purchase of any railway or the determination of any contract from or with such company."—(Mr. Secretary Brodrick).

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<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.)</i>	1476
<i>The Secretary of State for India (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford)</i> ..	1477
<i>Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.)</i>	1478
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i>	1479
<i>Mr. Caldwell</i>	1480
<i>Mr. Brodrick</i>	1482
<i>Mr. Black (Banffshire)</i>	1483

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise in the United Kingdom on the security of the revenues of India, by the creation and issue of capital stock, bonds, debentures, or bills, a sum, not exceeding £20,000,000, for the following purposes :—
(a) The construction, extension, and equipment of railways in India by State agency, or through the agency of companies ; (b) the repayment of the principal of any bonds or debentures issued by any such company under the guarantee of the Secretary of State ; (c) The discharge of any obligations incurred by the Secretary of State by reason of the purchase of any railway or the determination of any contract from or with such company.—(*Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*)

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

Naval Lands (Volunteers) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[*Mr. HARDY (Kent, Ashford)* in the Chair.]

Clause 1:

Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.) 1484

Amendment proposed—

“ In page 1, line 5, to leave out the words ‘ as amended by any subsequent enactment.’ ”—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, “ That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause.”

The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Arthur Lee, Hampshire, Fareham) 1486

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 153 ; Noes, 82. (Division List No. 207.)

Mr. Caldwell 1489

Amendment proposed—

“ In page 1, line 7, to leave out the words ‘ corps or other bodies of.’ ”—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) ..

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

<i>Mr. Caldwell</i>	1489
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i>	1490

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 148 ; Noes, 85. (Division List No. 208.)

Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles</i>	1493
<i>Mr. Caldwell</i>	1494

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again Monday next.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(AUTHORISED EDITION)

IN THE
SIXTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, IN THE
FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

SEVENTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 29th May, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2); Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1); Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3); Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company [H.L.].

Also the Certificate that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4).

And also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—

VOL. CXLVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway. (No 1).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [H.L.]; Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Hastings Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill. Read 3^a, and passed.

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Otley Improvement Bill. Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill; Liverpool Corporation Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Clyde Navigation Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Great Eastern Railway Bill; Loughborough Corporation Bill; Norwich Union Life Insurance Society Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Message from the Commons for copy of the Minutes of Evidence taken before this House; together with the proceedings and the documents deposited in the Cases. Ordered to be communicated, with a request that they may be returned.

Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill. Read 3^a (according to order); an Amendment made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill [H.L.]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a (according to order).

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill. Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow.

PETITIONS.

ADVERTISEMENTS REGULATION BILL [H.L.].

Petition for amendment of; of St. Marylebone Corporation; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (HOURS OF CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].

Petitions in favour of; of Ark of Safety Lodge of Good Templars; Never Die Lodge of Good Templars; Bristol Band of Hope Union; Bristol Temperance Federation; Barnsley Christian Endeavour Union; Folkestone Women's Temperance Society (2); United Kingdom Alliance; Victoria Bar Methodist Church (2); London Sons of Temperance; London Cadets of Temperance; Aldershot Women's Total Abstinence Association; Leicestershire Temperance Union; Emmanuel Tent of Rechabites; Greenland Street Sunday School; Wesleyan Methodist Conference; Wesleyan Methodist Church Synod; George Bird Lodge of Good Templars; Nil Desperandum Lodge of Good Templars; Islington Wesleyan Bible Class; Ashton-under-Lyne Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Society; Oxford Diocesan Church of England Temperance Society; Camberwell Girls' Friendly Society; National United Temperance Council; London United Temperance Council; Erdington Pleasant Sunday Services Association; Yardley Congregational Chapel; British Temperance League; National British Women's Temperance Association; Evesham Wesleyan Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Society; Gwyther Lodge of Good Templars; Kent Band of Hope Union; Educational and Mission Sections of Church of England Temperance Society; Wesleyan Reform Temperance League; Pembroke Sunday Guild; Hope of New Trindon Lodge Good Templars; Crescent Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Meeting; Howard Street Band of Hope and Temperance Society; Sunderland United Temperance Society; Crossfield Tent of Rechabites; Lancashire and Northern Counties Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Societies; Star Tent of Rechabites; Rescue Tent of Rechabites; Shrewsbury Circuit Sunday School Union; Shrewsbury District Sunday School Union; Friend Lodge of Good Templars; Daven-try Wesleyan Society; Berkshire Lodge of Good Templars; Penrith Branch of Church of England Temperance Society; Silvery Streamlet Lodge of Good Templars; James Rewcastle Lodge of Good Templars; St. Matthews' Christian Endeavour Society; Nelson Welcome Lodge

of Good Templars; Public Meetings at Sheerness-on-Sea, Liverpool (3), Ledbury, Walworth, St. Leonards, Wigan, Charlesworth, Manchester, Royal Victoria Theatre; and persons signing (8). Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3383. France (Nice).

No. 3384. Venezuela (Caracas).

ARMY (SPECIAL PENSIONS).

Return for the year ended March 31st, 1905, of pensions specially granted under Articles 730, 1173A, and 1207 of the Army Pay Warrant.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Report of Messrs. F. H. Dale and A. Stephens, His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Board of Education, on intermediate education in Ireland.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

GAS AND WATER WORKS FACILITIES ACT, 1870.

Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the consents of the South Hayling Parish Council and the North Hayling Parish Meeting in the case of the Hayling Island Gas Provisional Order. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS (HOURS OF CLOSING) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, in asking your Lordships to give a Second Reading to this Bill I shall not find it necessary, I am sure, to trouble you with any lengthy speech, partly because the matter is in itself so simple, and partly because the subject with which I am dealing is

already familiar to most of your Lordships. Those especially of your Lordships who are accustomed to take your place in the county business on the licensing bench are familiar already with practically everything that this Bill contains, and know the arguments that may be used on either side. The proposals that I now make are entirely consonant with the discussions which took place in this House last year, and which are clearly within the remembrance of your Lordships. There is one point upon which I desire first to say a word. I find, from remarks which have come to me from outside, that it has been supposed that what took place last week in the other House was by some kind of conjunction or arrangement to synchronise with what your Lordships are asked to do to-night. There is no foundation whatever for that idea. The date for the Second Reading of this Bill was fixed long ago, and I had no idea that a similar subject was going to be ventilated within two days in the House of Commons. But it is impossible to deny that the reception which proposals very much more drastic than anything I suggest met with in another place, and in the country, ought to be an encouragement to those of us who desire to see this very modest Bill passed into law.

Quite briefly, this Bill proposes to give power to the licensing bench to regulate the hours of week-day closing according to the popular demand, but within certain very clearly-defined limits, so as to avoid anything that can reasonably be called hardship either to the drinking public or to the sellers of liquor. Under the existing law public-houses in London are open, not by the will of the magistrates but by statutory provision, from five in the morning till half an hour after midnight. They are open in towns and populous places from six in the morning till midnight, and in the country from 6 a.m. till 10 p.m., speaking roughly. By this Bill magistrates may control the hour of closing, but, however enthusiastically inclined they may be to proceed in this direction, they must not direct a public-house to be closed before nine o'clock in the evening on any day other than Saturday or Sunday, or before eight o'clock upon Saturday at the very

earliest; and I myself have no anticipation that magistrates would be very apt to use the extremest power so given to them. In the next place, this Bill would give power to magistrates to limit the hours of Sunday opening to one hour at mid-day and one hour during the evening, and, if they think it desirable, to order that the drinking then should take place only off the premises. Do not let any of your Lordships suppose that the Bill provides that this is what shall be done; it merely provides that the magistrates shall have the power to do this if after consulting public opinion they find it desirable. The third main provision of the Bill is that in every case the magistrates shall take steps to satisfy themselves as to public opinion in the locality. The object, then, is perfectly clear, and I need not dwell further upon it.

What is the demand for this Bill? If your Lordships pay any attention at all to petitions presented to the House, you will have found that that demand is pretty far-reaching and widely spread. I myself have presented sixty petitions to-night, and very many more on previous occasions, and a large number of your Lordships have, I know, presented other petitions on the same subject. I have no doubt that many noble Lords—I think I see it in the face of the noble Earl opposite, Lord Wemyss—will say that these petitions all come from temperance folk, and that they do not really represent the popular demand; but we can go a great deal further than the mere petitions from temperance societies, though I should be the very last to discount their importance in the way it is sometimes discounted outside this House. The petitions that come from temperance societies largely come from men who have devoted quite an exceptional amount of attention to this subject in all its branches, and, as the petitions which I have presented show, they emanate by no means from fanatical and extreme partisans alone, but from those who avoid those characteristics altogether. But, quite apart from that, I can show a very large amount of support for what is here proposed from other sources than what is ordinarily called the temperance party. The Majority Report of the Royal Commission, signed by representatives of the

trade as well as other people, spoke quite strongly on the subject. With regard to the hours of closing, they say—

“We should welcome some further curtailment, but we do not think that public opinion will sanction any earlier hours of closing in the evening on week-days at present.”

I call your Lordships' attention to the careful reserves that are there. They do not think that public opinion will support it “at present.” Well, since then there has been a very large voice of public opinion which has made itself felt on this subject; and, in the event of public opinion being hostile to what is here proposed, the magistrates under the provisions of the Bill would not interfere. The Minority Report of the Royal Commission, signed by nearly half of the whole Commission, speaks on this subject in a strong and clear way. It says—

“Less attention than the question deserves, and less than is given to it in Ireland has been paid in England to the important subject of evening closing hours. It is generally acknowledged that drunkenness is greatest in the last hour or two of the day, the “fierce drinking,” as one witness characterises it, occurring between ten and eleven o'clock, and this is especially the case on Saturdays, days of leisure and of money, without the restraining influence of the prospect of early work next morning. . . . Conditions and habits are so various that it is not prudent to lay down an absolute limit without exceptions, and here, again, we would recommend that the licensing authority should be invested with the discretion to close two hours earlier than the present hour.”

The Act which was passed through Parliament last year gives to the licensing magistrates power to do this in all cases of new licences. Therefore, the new licences which will be issued henceforth may contain such a restriction as is here proposed, and that seems to show that there is nothing wrong in the principle of the licensing magistrates having this discretion. Public opinion has in very many of the large cities and large districts been directed to this subject, and I will read to your Lordships two of the many resolutions connected with this subject which have been passed by various public bodies. In July of last year the London County Council passed the following resolution, *nemine contradicente*—

“That this Council, being of opinion that licensed houses for the sale of intoxicating liquor are kept open till too late an hour, urges

His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department to promote legislation to confer powers on the licensing justices, enabling them to make regulations with respect to the time of opening and closing such premises in the County of London."

To take an example from a distance, I quote from the city of Liverpool, where the following resolution was passed by the corporation and signed by the Mayor—

"That this council being of opinion that houses licensed for the sale of intoxicants are allowed to open at too early an hour, and are kept open till too late an hour on week-days, and believing that these arrangements are detrimental to the best interests of the community, a petition be presented to His Majesty's Government praying that power may be conferred on licensing justices to close at their discretion all or any of such licensed premises in any portion of the whole of the city of Liverpool at an earlier hour than 11 p.m. on week-days and 10 p.m. on Sundays, and also to keep the same, or any other licensed premises, closed on week-days beyond the present hour of opening at 6 a.m., and that the Lord Mayor be requested to affix the Corporate seal to the petition."

I have quoted a great city in the North as well as the London County Council in the South. Again I repeat that the general point of this Bill is to leave discretion with the licensing magistrates.

And this is to be noted, because people talk as though, if the Bill became law, all public-houses would be closed early, whatever the popular inconvenience.

It is said, for example, that it would be simply intolerable if places of refreshment in the neighbourhood of theatres were to be closed at the time the performances conclude. Of course it would be; and no magistrates in their senses would think of bringing about a condition of things which would be a legitimate grievance to a very large number of English citizens; but the power to close at an earlier hour in places where such closing would not be detrimental ought not to be withheld merely because there are other places in which no bench of magistrates in their senses would think of exercising their power in a direction which would inflict so much hardship.

I would ask your Lordships' attention for a moment to the object-lesson set by Scotland. Your Lordships will remember that in Scotland up to the year 1887 the hours of opening and closing were regulated by statute, but in that year the

discretion was given to the licensing magistrates to curtail, within certain clearly-defined limits, the hour of closing in the evening. The House of Commons passed a measure making that provision applicable to the whole of Scotland, but in your Lordships' House an Amendment was carried providing that the large burghs, those over 50,000 inhabitants, should be exempt from this measure. Sixteen years passed, and in the year 1903 it was moved and carried through Parliament that the power of exemption in the case of these large cities should be taken away. It had been found that the provision worked so well in other places that it was felt it would work well in the large cities also, and from that time the magistrates in those cities have taken advantage of this provision. It is impossible to find a better object-lesson of the way in which this kind of thing works. I rest strongly upon the example which has been set in Scotland, and the way in which it has been found to correspond with the public taste and public inclination that the evening hour of closing should be an earlier one.

So much for the week-day part of this question. I now come to the portion of the Bill which deals with Sunday. Under the existing law public-houses in London open from one to three o'clock and from six to eleven o'clock. Elsewhere they are open from 12.30 to 2.30 and from six to ten o'clock. This Bill would give the magistrates power to restrict the hours of opening to one hour in the middle of the day, if they thought such a restriction necessary, and to one hour in the evening, if they thought that restriction necessary. It would further give them the power, if they thought it to be right, to say that the Sunday drinking should be done off the premises and not in the public-house. The Majority Report of the Royal Commission was in favour of some curtailment of the hours of opening on Sunday, partly in the interests of the public, and partly in the interests of the employees in those licensed houses. The Minority Report was in favour of almost exactly what I am asking your Lordships to accept tonight. It is not, I say again, suggested for a moment that the rule should be made applicable all over the country,

but that the licensing magistrates should have power to take local conditions and circumstances into account, and in the extremest case to reach the point I have mentioned. That is the utmost extent to which the Bill goes.

It will be open to your Lordships in Committee to limit still further the powers of the licensing magistrates. I need not say I shall be perfectly ready to listen to Amendments in that direction, provided the principle of the Bill is carried out and the licensing magistrates are allowed this discretion. Will your Lordships notice how widely different that provision is from the provision which only escaped being carried by six votes in the House of Commons on Friday last? It was there proposed that there should be practically complete Sunday closing. The arguments brought against it came to this, that you must not take the example of Scotland; that in Scotland people drink whisky, in England they drink beer; whisky will keep, beer will not; you cannot draw your beer on Saturday and drink it on Sunday. I quite agree, and my Bill accordingly provides that the public-houses should be open at the time when working men want their beer. I provide for all that. This Bill will not enable the magistrates, even if they desired to do so, to close the public-houses throughout the Sunday, but it does enable them, remembering that the public-house is the poor man's cellar, and that beer will not keep, to allow public-houses to remain open at the hour when the beer is wanted for meals at home.

This is a moderate measure. I am not one of those who have ever been able to join the advance wing of fanatical temperance reformers; and this Bill is one which enables, in the most moderate, reasonable, and restricted manner, the popular demand to be met by the licensing justices.

What are the obvious objections to this Bill? We shall at once be told that we legislated only last year upon this subject, and that we cannot reopen the whole question now. Certainly not; but will your Lordships carry your memories back to what passed in Committee last year, when we were

suggesting careful Amendments? The noble Lord representing the Home Office and others urged us not to overload the Bill with fresh matter, however excellent. We were told that there was no such thing as finality, and that if we wanted other things we must proceed separately later. It was said that the powers of magistrates could always be strengthened if it was found necessary. It is in obedience to that kind of suggestion that I bring forward this independent measure. It is entirely harmonious and consistent with what we did last year, when we were giving increased power to licensing magistrates and trusting them to exercise that for the good of the community as a whole. That it would be good for the community as a whole to diminish the late evening hours at which public-houses are open, I do not believe any one of your Lordships who knows the condition of the country will deny.

This is one of the cases in which we are dealing, not with the use, but with the abuse of places of public refreshment and entertainment. The spectacle which is presented by the public-houses in the more densely-populated parts of our towns at a late hour on Sunday night or on Sunday afternoon after the mid-day meal is over, when men and women gather there certainly not for legitimate refreshment, but for something else, is of itself, I believe, quite sufficient to justify us in giving the magistrates power to deal with this illegitimate and unwholesome drinking, should the community so desire it. I appeal without hesitation to those of your Lordships who are most familiar with the sights which our great cities present either late at night, or on Sundays, and I ask you to bear those scenes and sounds in mind in the votes you will give on this Bill. It may be said that the Majority Report of the Royal Commission distinctly thought it would be better that the hours should be definitely fixed by statute than that there should be a permission to magistrates to vary the hours in different districts. That was at the time a plausible argument, but at all events it has gone now, because by recent legislation you have given this power of magisterial variation

in all cases of new licences. The uniformity which was the sole basis upon which the Majority Report objected to give that power to magistrates has now for ever disappeared.

In recommending my Bill to the House I have not thought it necessary to base my advocacy of it on moral grounds. Of course, the religious and moral aspect of the question appeals most to me, but I know that your Lordships are all of one mind on that matter, and that it does not require argument. I have endeavoured to argue the question on practical, ordinary grounds in the interest of the community at large, and for the reason that, as the responsibilities of the licensing magistrates have been increased by recent legislation, their discretionary powers ought also to be increased; and it is with confidence that I submit the Bill to your Lordships.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."
—(*The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.*)

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, it is with great reluctance that I rise to oppose the Bill of my right rev. friend and archiepiscopal fellow-countryman; but although it is, as he said, a modest Bill, it would impose further restrictions upon human liberty, especially upon that of those who are cellarless—the great mass of the population. The public-house is an essential element in one present social state, and we have no right to unduly interfere with it. The publican is a public servant, the licensee of the Government. Interference with liberty began with Mr. Gladstone's Irish legislation, and every year legislation in this direction places further restrictions upon liberty. Now it would be well for your Lordships, when you are told the great evil that results from drink and drunkenness, to study the figures. Some years ago I was told that a very distinguished medical man, a countryman of mine, had said that of the total number of deaths more were caused by over-eating, by eating unwholesome food, and too much of it, than by alcohol. I wrote last night to this gentleman—he is a most distinguished professor—and got this wire from him this morning—

"Am of opinion that over-eating and bad food cause as serious effects as excessive drinking."

Further, I saw my own medical man to-day, and he endorses this view. Moreover, I hold in my hand official *data* on the subject which cannot be disputed. It is the Monthly Return of the Births, Deaths, and Marriages registered in eight of the principal towns of Scotland, with the causes of death; and I find from this that during the month of April, 1905, there were registered in the towns of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, Paisley, Leith, Greenock, and Perth, 2,446 deaths. "Alcoholism" is one of the many headings under which deaths are here registered and I should like to ask my right rev. friend who has brought in this Bill how many of those deaths he thinks were from alcoholism. Will he give a guess? He prefers not to. Well, I think he would be very far out in his estimate if he did. There were only five deaths from alcoholism out of a total of 2,446, my Lords, in the whole of these towns throughout the month of April.

Then I have recently read in newspapers that it has been shown by scientific medical inquiry that taking fifty-one as the age to which the pure-water drinker lives, it is found that the unmitigated drunkard lives two years longer. My noble and learned friend on the Wool-sack doubtless remembers the case of Jane Cakebread, who was convicted hundreds of times for drunkenness; yet people of that type it is shown live longer than water drinkers. And it is further shown that the moderate users of alcohol, such as your Lordships, live twelve years longer than water-drinkers. These are remarkable facts, and should be borne in mind by those who declare that alcoholism is a great injury to the human race. But what I feel very strongly is the way in which the publican, who, after all, is as said a public servant, is spoken of and dealt with. There is no feeling of justice towards him by those who are in favour of suppressing all alcoholic drink. The Government last year brought in a Bill to do justice to the publican, and were, and are still, denounced for it; and the story goes that in the new Newcastle programme of my noble friends on my left they are going to make an assault on that Act. My impression is that they will leave it alone. I believe there will be

fewer votes to be got by touching it than by leaving it alone. You cannot but deny that justice was not done to the publican before, and that all that the Government did was to put him in the same position that publicans occupy in Ireland, where, if they lose their licences through no fault of their own, they are compensated.

There is another point with regard to alcohol which should be borne in mind. Nature, more or less, demands alcohol, and it has been found that flowers, if they are inclined to fade, benefit if alcohol is put into the water in which they are placed—it is a pick-me-up to them. Do not imagine, my Lords, that I do not sympathise with those who wish to suppress drunkenness; I think the drunkard is a great nuisance, but he will not be put an end to by this sort of legislation. He will get his drink somehow, while the sober man will be made to suffer by his means of ordinary enjoyment being restricted. There are three reliable remedies for drunkenness. The first and the real remedy for the state of things which the right rev. Primate desires to alter would be found in a Bill to excise surgically the gustatory nerve, so that people could not distinguish between the taste of beer and water, or champagne and porter. The operation might be performed on children at the same time as vaccination. That would be an effective course, but I do not think my noble friends who favour this legislation would be likely to bring in a Bill for the purpose.

Then it must be admitted that time in this matter shows a great improvement in the habits of the people. I can go a long way back, and can remember the time when there were what were called “four-bottle men”; that is to say, men who would sit down after dinner and soak and get rid of two, three, or four bottles. There is no such thing now. It is difficult to find “four-glass” men now, and perhaps a couple of glasses of claret or a glass of port is all that is drunk after dinner. Depend upon it, all these things go by example; and just as the customs of the upper and middle classes have improved, so gradually will those of the working classes, and that without restrictive legislation. There is another cure,

Lord Wemyss.

and it is, I believe, the only one that we can practically use—that is, the police. I hold that a drunkard is a nuisance. Dr. Wallace, in another place, said that a thorough drunkard, if he was drunk and incapable, was no nuisance. The nuisance is the drunken man who goes “serpentine” in his walk, and butting up against people. I hold that any man who is in that state should be arrested as a nuisance, shut up, and confined, and those who manufacture these nuisances should lose their licences if it could be shown that they habitually turned out drunken men. That, I believe, is the only practical and sensible way of dealing with the question.

I have not entered into the details of this Bill. I object to it as a further restriction of human liberty. Those who have watched the legislation of this country must have seen how, since 1870, it has, as I have said, more or less interfered with liberty. We used to boast that we were a free and unbureaucratic people. We are becoming less so every day. There is interference going on in every direction, and if it is continued we shall probably become, instead of a free and unbureaucratic people, one of the most Government-ridden people in the world. I wish, before sitting down, to read a quotation to which I am sure your Lordships will give the weight which the bravery and the eloquence of its author demand. Let me first read the quotation and then say whence it comes—

“I entertain the strongest dislike to the permissive Bill. I cannot, perhaps, express it in a stronger form than by saying that, if I must take my choice—and such it seems to me is really the alternative offered by the permissive Bill—whether England should be free or sober, I declare, strange as such a declaration may sound, coming from one of my profession, that I should say it would be better that England should be free than that England should be compulsorily sober. I would distinctly prefer freedom to sobriety, because with freedom we might in the end attain sobriety; but in the other alternative we should eventually lose both freedom and sobriety.”

He winds up—

“If I was compelled to choose between a law which destroyed liberty, and a law which left intemperance, to a certain degree, untouched, I should vote against the law that destroyed liberty. I believe liberty to be the life of a nation; you cannot destroy the liberty of a

nation without destroying all its noblest qualities, and if you destroy all the noblest qualities of a nation, and turn the people into slaves, in the end you promote intemperance, as you do also almost every vice that belongs to slavery."

I think my right rev. friend knows whence that passage comes. It comes from one of the ablest, and, as I have said, bravest and most eloquent of men. That statement was made in 1872 from these benches by Bishop Magee, of Peterborough, who subsequently became Archbishop of York; and it is because I agree heart and soul with those eloquent words that I venture to oppose the Bill now before the House on the broad principle here stated, and to move that the Bill be read a second time this day three months.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out the word 'now' and add at the end of the Motion the words, 'this day three months.'"—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

THE LORD BISHOP OF CHICHESTER: My Lords, I am entirely with the noble Earl who has just sat down, in the matter of human liberty, but in all civilised countries we must be assured that a man does not exercise his liberty to the detriment of his neighbour. The noble Earl himself allows that he would in certain cases curtail that liberty; he would curtail it in the case of the "serpentine" walker, and in the case also of the man who offends in regard to his licence by manufacturing the "serpentine" walker. It is obviously clear that there must be limits to liberty in certain directions. What are the factory laws but limitations of liberty? Why do you object to one man sleeping on another man's doorstep? That action is an interference with the man's liberty. The whole history of legislation in regard to the drink traffic has been one of restriction and not of extension. The noble Earl spoke of over-eating. When we find that the fact of butchers' shops being open up to a late hour at night sends men home to beat their wives and ill-treat their children I think it will be time then to bring in a measure to shut up those butchers' shops at an earlier hour. I have never heard that if a man offends by taking another plate of meat he loses self con-

trol and is inclined to go on ordering plate after plate of meat to the detriment of his health and the impoverishment of his family. The noble Earl spoke of the object of those who support this Bill as being really prohibition.

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS: On the road to it.

THE LORD BISHOP OF CHICHESTER: I doubt whether we shall ever reach the end of that road. I have no such object. I do not think that if I had the power of shutting up every public-house in England I would exercise that power. I recognise that there must be these public-houses. The only thing that we ask is that they should be conducted under restrictions which seem to be good for those for whom these houses are opened. That really underlies the whole purpose of the Bill. I would point out to the House that the Bill, after all, is only a permissive Bill. What does that mean exactly? It means that those for whom these houses are supposed to be opened shall have the liberty of appealing to the magistrates in order that their wishes may be endorsed by the action of the magistrates themselves.

I believe from my own knowledge of the working classes that a very large proportion of them would very gladly welcome the passing of such a Bill as this. This is no new idea, as has already been pointed out by the most rev. Primate. Magistrates have already, in the case of new licences, this power, and this Bill only proposes to place old licences on exactly the same footing as new licences. I am not at all sure that I should recommend Glasgow as a place that we should look to in the matter of the regulation of our drink customs, but already the shortening of the hours in Glasgow has done great good. I find from the police reports that the streets are quieter, property is safer, and that the police are able to look after property at an earlier hour in the night. As we all know, it is during the last hour that the worst kind of drinking and the most unnecessary kind of drinking takes place. My own belief is that if there were one law for

all, the publicans would heartily welcome the restriction of hours. They are people who like their liberty just as much as anybody else. The shortening of the hours would, in my opinion, very greatly benefit the physical well-being of the nation. We can hardly read the Report of the Committee on Physical Deterioration without very grave misgivings, and in spite of what the noble Earl has said the fact still remains that an undue use of alcohol does tend to a very serious deterioration of the physical well-being of our people. It also affects trade and commerce, because we learn from innumerable employers of labour that the late hours of drinking on Sundays do most seriously affect the recommencement of work on the Mondays. This Bill is exceedingly moderate in its tone; it will allow the working classes themselves to speak through the licensing magistrates, and I hope your Lordships will not turn a deaf ear to the wishes of the people of this country.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, your Lordships will expect that I should make a few remarks on behalf of His Majesty's Government with regard to this Bill. In the first place let me recognise, as I am sure the whole House does, the great moderation with which the most rev. Primate explained the Bill to the House. I have no wish to enter into any contest with regard to the main part of his remarks, but shall address myself mainly to the principle of the Bill. The principle of the Bill is to change the law which has prevailed in this country for a long number of years that the hours of closing of public-houses should be fixed by statute, and to transfer that power to local authorities within certain defined limits. We are not entirely without some experience of the working of a Bill founded on those lines. By the Act of 1872 discretionary power was given to justices with regard to the closing of public-houses. That Act, however, did not remain long in force. When the present law was passed in 1874 a good deal of discussion took place in Parliament with regard to the repeal of the Act of 1872, in the course of which it was stated by the Under-Secretary for the Home Department that one of the gravest difficulties in the Act of 1872 had arisen from

the discretion given to magistrates to fix the hours of closing. It was also stated that the Act had not worked well, because in many cases the magistrates had refused to exercise their power.

The effect of passing the Bill now before the House would be to give absolute discretion to magistrates not only to fix hours in one district different from the hours in another district, but also to fix hours for one public-house different from the hours of another public-house in the same district; and it would go so far even in country districts as to enable different hours to be fixed in regard to different public-houses in the same village. I do not think Parliament would be well advised if they passed a Bill which would have an effect of that kind. How would that affect the Metropolis? I understand that in London there would be fifteen different authorities for fixing the hours of closing. In a large number of these districts the divisions between the different boroughs are not defined, so that anyone walking about the streets could not tell whether he was in one borough or in another, and in many instances, I believe, the houses on one side of a street are in one borough and the houses on the other side in another. His Majesty's Government hold the view that the greatest inconvenience would arise in the Metropolis if we adopted a system under which the hours would be fixed by different authorities.

The Majority Report of the Royal Commission recommended on these grounds that the regulations as to the hours of closing should be laid down by statute. I am perfectly aware that the most rev. Primate got over that by saying that we had in Clause 4 of the Licensing Act of last year given a power to local authorities to make conditions in granting new licences, and that amongst those conditions they had the power to fix an earlier hour for closing. I would only remind the House that we had considerable discussion last year on a proposal to extend these powers to magistrates in the case of existing licences as well as new licences, and that these powers were expressly sanctioned as only to refer to new licences. But if it is argued that the use of this power at present causes equal

Lord Bishop of Chichester.

confusion, let me point out what is the case with regard to new licences. The strongest possible arguments were used last year to show the enormous number of unnecessary licences that exist, and a great part of the Bill was addressed to doing away with a large number of them. New licences are practically never granted now except in the case of new districts where there are no licences already, but where the public require some opportunity of obtaining alcoholic liquors. I am speaking not only of what I imagine must be the case, but I know that in my own neighbourhood no new licences have been granted except in a new district. If in the case of those new licences the magistrates fix the condition that the hours of closing shall be earlier there is no other house in competition and no injustice is done. I cannot see, therefore, that the provision in the Act of last year with regard to new licences does away with the argument in favour of the hours of closing of public-houses being fixed by statute.

The conditions in Scotland are so different from the conditions in England that, so far as I can understand, the objection to giving the power to magistrates in England does not exist in Scotland. In Scotland you have one licensing authority for the whole county, and therefore none of the inconveniences I have referred to occur in Scotland. I have been given to understand that in Scotland there is a good deal of consumption of the national drink in private houses, and therefore earlier closing would not affect Scotland in the same way. If the Act passed for Scotland is to be quoted for the success of this proposal, as it has been to-day, we ought to have been given time to learn by experience what the effect of earlier closing has been. The report of the Chief Constable of Glasgow states that although the streets are quieter and property is safer, there has been no substantial decrease of drunkenness as a result of earlier closing.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My argument was not that there was less drunkenness. There has not been time to ascertain whether that

is so or not. My argument was that fourteen years ago the smaller towns obtained the power of closing at an earlier hour, and that after watching that for fourteen years the bigger towns asked leave to follow their example, and have followed it, seeing how well it worked.

LORD BELPER: I only mentioned that because, as the case of Scotland was being quoted, I thought it would be more satisfactory if the introduction of this Bill had been postponed until we had had some further experience as to the success of the Act in Scotland. I have particulars to show that in many parts of the country there has been a large increase of clubs. A strong feeling prevails that some restriction should be placed upon them. The conditions under which drinking takes place in them are less satisfactory than in public-houses, and there is some fear that if public-houses are closed at an earlier hour you will be driving persons to clubs in order to obtain drink. It is true that requisitions have been received at the Home Office in favour of the granting of earlier hours of closing, but I do not think that any of these requisitions express a wish for any particular mode of giving effect to the principle of early closing, or that the licensing magistrates should have the power conferred upon them as provided in this Bill. Further experience may show that earlier hours are desirable, but I think it would be better in the meantime to wait and see what the effect is of the legislation recently passed before a fresh Bill is agreed to.

I think the most rev. Primate was conscious of the Government's difficulty in this matter. It is quite clear that no large measure, no measure likely to be contested, could pass through Parliament this session. We have had licensing legislation in two sessions of Parliament, and the Government feel that it would be wise to give time for considering the effect of those measures before passing further Bills. Fully recognising the moderation and the sincerity with which the most rev. Primate brought forward this Bill, I have to inform him that the Government regret that they cannot give their support to the Bill for the reasons I have stated.

We do not believe that the particular mode suggested by him in the Bill is one which would form a satisfactory solution of the question, and we feel it would be desirable to allow further time before again passing a measure with regard to licensing reform.

THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON : My Lords, I should not myself have intervened in this debate were it not for the fact that I represent the views, not only of the Church of England temperance bodies in London, but the whole of the Nonconformist bodies as well. I can speak also from the fulness of nine years' experience of a London slum district in which the evils of the drink traffic could be seen. Opinion, in London at any rate, among the bodies interested in this question, is united in favour of united action being taken by the magistrates on this question. The noble Lord who represents the Home Office said that it was true that petitions had been presented in favour of the granting of earlier hours of closing, but he did not think that any of those requisitions expressed a wish for any particular mode of giving effect to the principle of early closing, or that the licensing magistrates should have the power conferred upon them as provided in this Bill. I would call his attention to the petitions from the London County Council and the Liverpool Corporation, in which they pray for the conferring of a power on the justices to close the public-houses at their discretion.

LORD BELPER : I expressly said that I only spoke of the petitions that had been sent to the Home Office. I do not know the contents of the other petitions.

THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON : I contend that the provision of facilities to obtain drink after ten o'clock at night is bad for the people, bad for the publican, and bad for the community at large. The ordinary working man obtains his drink usually before ten o'clock, and when it is obtained after that hour it tends to the demoralisation of those who gather in the public-houses. Your Lordships have no conception how strongly the publican feels on this subject. When

I had charge of a poor parish in Bethnal Green I used to call on publicans to show them that the Church did not look upon them as outcasts, and every publican I spoke to complained that he led a dog's life and had no time wherein he might attend to higher personal matters. If your Lordships could see, moreover, Sunday drinking in a public-house in a slum district between one and three o'clock in the afternoon, I am certain that you would never wish to see the spectacle again. These public-houses are crowded with people, and it is not pleasing to see the condition in which they leave the premises when closed at three o'clock. The Bill allows the working man to have his beer "fresh" on Sunday, but we are anxious to prevent the "soaking" that goes on in the public-houses between the hours of one and three o'clock. On the subject of liberty, is it liberty to bind a traffic on the community which it wishes to get rid of? If the provision of facilities to obtain drink after reasonable hours is bad for the people, bad for the publican, and bad for the community at large, for whose benefit is it kept up? I certainly do not entertain the view that the brewers wish to demoralise the community by having unrestricted liberty to continue the sale of drink in the public-houses; and as the present state of things is against the highest interest of everyone concerned I heartily support the Second Reading of this Bill.

EARL SPENCER : My Lords, up to the present moment it has only been from the Episcopal Bench that a defence of this Bill has come. I, therefore, think it right that I should explain the view I take with regard to it. I cannot agree with the noble Lord who spoke on behalf of the Government. I shall not go into that great question which the noble Earl, Lord Wemyss, so often brings before the House—namely, the great subject of liberty. I am inclined to share the views of the speakers on the Episcopal Bench, especially in respect of the argument that we are infringing the liberty of the people by such measures. Parliament has not recognised this principle in previous legislation, as may be seen in the case of the Factory Acts. When those Acts were introduced, there

was just as much opposition to them on the score of infringing liberty as is to be seen in respect of the present Bill. Yet no one will now say that the Factory Acts have not tended to promote health and the moral well-being of the community.

The noble Lord who represents the Home Office did not argue against the necessity for this reform, but rested his case on the fact that the Bill would infringe what had been hitherto the practice—namely, that the hours of opening and closing public-houses should be uniform and should be fixed by statute. I share the view of the right rev. Prelate that the noble Lord did not urge that argument with any force in regard to the statute that was passed last year. In the case of new licences the power was given to the licensing magistrates to shorten the hours during which public-houses might remain open. I submit that the Scotch case, as well as the Act of last year, justify the principle now proposed to be extended, while, with regard to clubs, it has not been established that by diminishing the hours during which public-houses are opened, there has been an improper use of clubs, or that drunkenness has increased. I do not wish to go any further into this matter. I leave it to the right rev. bench and others to enforce the great necessity for further legislation in this matter. But I shall be exceedingly sorry if this Bill does not meet with support from a majority of your Lordships.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, I recognise the moderation and the wisdom of the remarks of the most rev. Primate, and I suppose no one will question the desire your Lordships all have to do anything in your power for the diminution of drunkenness. My objection to the Bill, however, is that it will do nothing in that direction. Indeed, I think it objectionable on many grounds. It is an annoying thing to any trade to be continually harassed by Parliament as to the conditions under which its members carry on their trade unless something is proved against them. I do not deny that cases of excess occur; on the other hand, there may be cases in which it is a relief to a working man to spend an

hour, not for "soaking," but to meet with his friends and associates, just as your Lordships may associate with people in your own clubs. A public-house, properly conducted, is the working man's club, and it is a most unfair thing to try to entirely change a man's course of life because he happens to be of a different class from yourselves. I was surprised to hear the example of the Factory Acts cited in support of the present measure, because those Acts were designed to protect women and children against those who improperly interfered with their health and morals. There is one class of the community I really must appeal for in connection with this measure, and that is the magistrates themselves. Let me read Clause 4 of this Bill to your Lordships—

"In considering the matter of reducing the hours of opening licensed premises under this Act, the licensing justices shall have regard to representations made to them in any licensing meeting by the inhabitants of the locality, or to any resolutions thereon which may be adopted by any local authority within their licensing district."

In what way are the magistrates to ascertain the opinion of the locality? Are they to take a plebiscite or what? If I were asked to construe this part of the Bill I should be obliged to say that I had not the least idea how the justices were to "have regard to representations made to them." Magistrates have a difficult duty to perform. They discharge those duties most admirably, and, though many people seem to forget it, gratuitously. They do not, however, always give satisfaction as it is. Imagine their difficulty when they are required by statute to have regard to any representations made by the inhabitants of the locality. How is that to be done? Is it to be by a public meeting, or in what way are the magistrates to ascertain the opinion of the locality? I submit that it is a very undesirable thing to be always tinkering with this particular trade. After the attention Parliament has so recently given to it, we ought at least to allow a year or two to elapse before further legislation is proposed. I heartily regret that this subject is so continually before the House, and I shall certainly vote with my noble friend who moved the Amendment.

*THE MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON: My Lords, I did not intend addressing your Lordships to-night, but after the speech of the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack I may perhaps add a little to the evidence that has already been given in favour of this measure. In the first place I do not think that we need have any fear about burdening our magistrates with duties which they cannot perform. After all, charging the magistrate with these duties is not a new thing. On the contrary, it has been already tried in Scotland, and there has been no grumbling on the part of the magistrates there. They have done their duty extremely well, as magistrates always do. The Acts that have been passed have worked very smoothly. The noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack says he objects to tinkering with this question. It seems to me that it is almost time for this country to do something more than it has done in the past in order to put an end to what we all know to be a national curse. I do not wish to use exaggerated language, but I do not think that anybody can have an idea of what is going on in our midst unless they have done as I have done—visited the public-houses between the hours of eleven and 12.30 at night. I can only wish that the Lord Chancellor would do the same.

The houses near the theatres and music-halls are very respectable and the people very nice indeed. But if one goes further afield into the small public-houses of the East End and other parts of London one sees a very different state of affairs. There one would see between eleven o'clock and 12.30, not men who had dropped in to see friends, but men who had already been to six or seven public-houses, who were already full, and who take a final glass too much at the latest hour of the night. If the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack would go and even stand outside one of these houses with the policeman on duty there and see the exit of the last man I think he would change his views about early closing. The experience of every individual who knows tends to show that the largest amount of drunkenness takes place late at night and not in the early hours of the evening. The Lord Chancellor stated

that it was most unfair to what is called "the trade" that we should go on meddling with their business unless we could prove something against them. These measures are not brought forward to punish the trade. On the contrary, if it is question of liberty, I cannot imagine a worse slavery than that to which the employés in the trade are subjected. Public-houses have been compared to our clubs. Do we treat the servants in our clubs as the servants are treated in public-houses, where they often work from five o'clock in the morning till half-past twelve at night? We all know that is not the case, and I think some protest should be offered against the attempt which has been made to prove similarity between our clubs and public-houses. The condition of the people employed in public-houses will be bettered by this Bill.

Nothing surprises me more than that noble Lords from Scotland should speak against this measure. It may be said that this provision has not met with complete success in Scotland, but we are able to judge of that from the returns. It has been at work for months in Glasgow, and the returns of police offences during three months of this year show a decrease, and if that decrease continues at the same ratio for the remaining nine months of the year there will be a reduction of 3,400 police cases in one year in that town alone.

LORD BELPER: I quoted the return for the whole year for the City of Glasgow, and in that return it was stated that no deduction could be drawn as to any decrease in drunkenness.

*THE MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON: Then I think the noble Lord ought to tell us why the police cases have suddenly been reduced by this large number.

LORD BELPER: I do not know what your figures are. I quoted from the official return for the year 1904 for the City of Glasgow, and in that return it was stated that there were no figures from which one could draw any deduction with regard to any diminution in drunkenness.

*THE MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON: I ask the noble Lord whether he denies the fact that there has been a large reduction in police offences in Glasgow.

LORD BELPER: I have not got those figures.

*THE MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON: I think we have a right to say that the large reduction which has taken place has been owing to the new legislation, and that the experiment which has been tried is a successful one. Again, employers of labour unanimously tell us that in their own opinion it is doing good in Scotland. The unanimous opinion of those who are interested, not so much perhaps in temperance work as in religious work, who are heartily in support of doing everything they can to minimise the temptations of working men, is that since the original Scottish Act was passed to reduce the number of hours

public-houses were open a better state of affairs has existed in Scotland, except in the large cities which, unfortunately, for a time were exempted. Then came the legislation for the large cities of Scotland; the magistrates at once adopted the earlier hour, and since then there has been a large decrease in the number of police offences in the large cities where the Act has been enforced. This is nothing more than a permissive Bill; the magistrates have the power to do certain things under the Bill. There may be a few details such as those mentioned by the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack which may need amendment in Committee, but the principle of the Bill is a good one, and I hope your Lordships will support it.

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O'Neill, L.
Reay, L.
Sandhurst, L.
Shuttleworth, L.
Stalbridge, L.
Stanley of Alderley, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Halsbury, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)
Vane, E. (*M. Londonderry.*)
(*L. President.*)

Grafton, D.
Marlborough, D.
Newcastle, D.
Portland, D.
Richmond and Gordon, D.
Wellington, D.

Ailesbury, M.
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Winchester, M.
Zetland, M.

Pembroke and Montgomery, E.
(*L. Steward.*)
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Carnwath, E.
Coventry, E.
Dartrey, E.
Doncaster, E. (*D. Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)
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Llandaff, V.
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Aldenham, L.
Allerton, L.
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Newton, L.

Poltimore, L.
Rathmore, L.
Ravensworth, L.
Robertson, L.
Rosmead, L.
Sinclair, L.
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*T. Galloway.*)
Ventry, L.
Wemyss, L. (*E. Wemyss.*)
Windsor, L.

Bill to be read 2^a this day three months.

LOTTERIES IN BRISTOL.

THE LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL :
My Lords, I rise to call attention to the issue of advertisements of large money prizes to be drawn for under cover, or supposed cover, of a sanction by the Board of Trade (Art Union Drawings) at a carnival to be held in Bristol in the month of June in the interest of the funds of the Bristol Royal Infirmary. As your Lordships are no doubt aware, in 1846 an Act had to be passed for legalising Art Unions, for it was found that they came under the provisions of the Act against lotteries and other illegal games, and under that Act there was given to the members, subscribers, and contributors protection from pains and penalties so long only as their proceedings were carried on in good faith for the encouragement of the Fine Arts. That is the great point—they were only protected from pains and penalties so long as their proceedings were carried on for the encouragement of the Fine Arts. There was no possibility of partnership with any other object.

The Bristol Royal Infirmary was very seriously in debt, and it was proposed to hold a great carnival for six days in the month of June next, of which I was asked to become a patron, and I gladly consented to do so. When I give my name for such a purpose I always stipulate that there shall be no raffles and that nothing alcoholic shall be sold. Shortly after I accepted the patronage I had a paper placed in my hands in one of our tramway carriages in Bristol, from which I will quote two paragraphs—

“It has been disclosed that one of the methods will be the holding of a summer carnival at the Clifton Zoological Gardens on a scale never

before attempted, and the arrangements for this are now afoot. One of its most unique features will be the combination of the Art Union drawing of the Bristol Fine Arts Academy (usually held annually as an independent enterprise) with the proposed Royal Infirmary carnival. The idea emanated from Mr. Samuel White, who is known to have the interests of the Royal Infirmary keenly at heart, and also is a supporter of the Fine Arts Academy. The scheme having heartily commended itself to Sir George White and Sir William Henry Wills, the respective presidents of these two institutions, received also the prompt approval of the Board of Trade, who are the Government Department responsible for the supervision of Art Union drawings.”

Further on there appeared this statement—

“It is an important part of Mr. White’s scheme that any prize-winner who is not perfectly satisfied with his prize will be free to elect to hand the work of art over to Mr. White, who will buy it back from the winner at the cash price for which it had already been purchased from the artist.”

I at once wrote to the infirmary committee to say that that, in my judgment made this Art Union drawing simply a drawing for money prizes, and therefore, in my opinion, illegal. I stated that that being so, I must withdraw from the position of patron. I then wrote a second letter to say that this had become known, and I was receiving communications from Nonconformists and Church people urging me to go further still. Finally, I wrote to tell them that as I could not get the slightest indication of any willingness to reconsider the matter, there was nothing left to me but to put myself at the head of those in Bristol who were anxious to make a very solid protest against this. We agreed upon a letter which we should write to the newspapers. But, first of all, I must read to your Lordships the actual sanction given by the Board of Trade. It was addressed to the hon. secretary of the Fine Art Union, and is as follows—

“Sir,—In reply to your letter of February 18th, submitting to the consideration of this

Department a scheme for the drawing for prizes in the Bristol Art Union during the coming year, I am directed by the Board of Trade to inform you that they are prepared to approve of the necessary alterations in the rules and regulations to enable the drawing to take place in the manner proposed. For this purpose they approve of the subscription being 20 per cent. of the sums received for admission tickets to the carnival, entitling the purchasers to participate in the drawings under the scheme, instead of the subscription of one shilling prescribed by the rules, subject to the guarantee of a minimum prize fund of £1,000. They further approve of a drawing for prizes being held on each day of the carnival at the gardens of the Bristol, Clifton, and West of England Zoological Society, instead of one drawing being held in the year at the Exhibition Rooms."

The plan was to use the Art Union for the funds of the infirmary, making the two interests into one, and giving one-fifth to art and four-fifths to the infirmary, and I contend that this constitutes an unlawful creation of a partnership. I will now read to your Lordships the letter which we sent to the newspapers—

"Sir,—We have been hoping that the committee of the Royal Infirmary would withdraw the proposal to give the money value of pictures drawn at the approaching carnival in aid of the funds of that deserving institution. We now feel obliged to give public expression to the dismay which we feel at the prospect of its being carried out. While at the same time we recognise the great generosity of Mr. Samuel White's offer"—

—may I say that the Messrs. White have been most generous to me in helping me in Church extension matters, and they have rendered much assistance to the poor people of Bristol generally—

"we cannot but regard the drawing for pictures on so very large a scale as that indicated under the cover of the name of an 'Art Union Drawing' as a misuse of the Act of Parliament; and we are surprised that the Board of Trade has sanctioned it. Under the Act the lottery must be in good faith for the encouragement of the Fine Arts, and, apart from the offer to buy back at cost price pictures drawn, we feel a strong moral objection to the proposed lottery for the funds of the Royal Infirmary. The further proposal to give the money value of a picture in the place of the picture itself to anyone who professes to be not perfectly satisfied with the prize he has drawn converts the drawing into a money lottery. Considering the terrible curse which betting and gambling and all forms of staking money on chance are known to be, and the breaking down of moral character which they entail in so many cases, we do earnestly protest against this part of the proposal being carried out."

That letter was signed by myself, by the Dean of Bristol, the two archdeacons,

and four of the leading Nonconformist ministers. That, so far as we know, had no effect. Then a Question was asked in the House of Commons, and it was clear from the Answer that the Board of Trade had begun to see that this was going much too far, and had communicated to the Art Union that the offer to redeem the prizes for a money prize must be withdrawn, and withdrawn it was.

I did not propose to do any more. But then came a flood of advertisements announcing money prizes to be given at this drawing. This was clearly the action of a third body not controlled by the Board of Trade and not protected by their sanction. The advertisements did not mention pictures at all, and only announced prizes of £250, £100, and so on. We began to find that Bristol was flooded with these advertisements, and especially the tramcars, of which the Messrs. White are the managers. I have in my hand a green bill on which there are two red lines, the one announcing "Bristol Carnival Week" and the second containing the words "To raise £50,000 for the Bristol Royal Infirmary," and the bill proceeds to state that the minimum prizes on the Monday will be £400, on the Tuesday £200, on the Wednesday £100, on the Thursday £100, on the Friday £100, and on the Saturday £100. There was also a statement that season-tickets for the six days, for £1,000 in prizes, could be had at the reduced rate of 10s. 6d.; but from first to last the word "picture" is not even remotely alluded to in the Bill. How it can conceivably be legal I do not know. Here is a yellow circular with the same red lines on the front page. Inside there is a list of pictures, and opposite is stated the value of the prizes in money. I have here the season-ticket which is to be sold, and is to convey all these privileges. There is upon it in comparatively small letters "Bristol Art Union," but the heading is "Bristol Royal Infirmary Carnival." There are set forth on the tickets the minimum prizes for the week—£1,000: Monday, £400; Tuesday, £200; Wednesday, £100; Thursday, £100; Friday, £100; and Saturday, £100. It is announced on the ticket that it is a ticket of admission to the carnival once each day, and for one share each day in

the prize drawings; and the word "drawings" does not mean drawings for pictures, but drawings for prizes. Again the word picture is not mentioned. Then I have the actual card which, I believe, the Art Union has put up—

"Bristol Art Union Drawings in connection with the Bristol Carnival week, June 26th to July 1st, 1905. Monday, 1st prize, £250."

and then there is printed at the bottom the name of the picture. I have here a few of the tickets with which we are supplied by the thousand in the tramway carriages of Bristol. There are some twenty of them, but I have only found one on which the word picture is mentioned at all. The only reference is to money. One ticket states—

"This ticket will not give you a picture, but a carnival ticket may."

That is the only case in which I have found any mention of picture on these various tickets. One of these tickets reads—

"Don't argue about methods, but help the infirmary by buying a ticket for the carnival."

I do think it is time somebody put a stop to people being told that they are not to argue about methods, but are to take part in this gamble to help an infirmary. Here is another ticket—

"Help the infirmary and buy a chance in £1,000 or more at the same time."

Another one reads—

"The prize fund will be £10,000 if £50,000 worth of carnival tickets are sold. Buy now."

Now I come to exceedingly cruel advertisements. You will laugh at the first—

"He won't be happy till he gets it! The £250 first prize. Buy his ticket now."

The next one reads—

"Mother will be pleased if you win the £250 prize."

There you have an appeal to the child to give pleasure to its mother by staking its savings in this way.

Occupying the position I do in Bristol, I am sure your Lordships will readily understand my feeling strongly on this matter. I wrote to the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Trade a fortnight ago; the letter reached the Board of Trade the day after the noble Marquess was taken ill. I feel convinced that the Board of Trade, on seeing this

notice on your Lordships' Paper, sent some messenger to Bristol, because there appeared in the tramway carriages a second ticket, the red line in this case reading—

"Sixty picture prizes."

Up to that time the red line had announced £10,000 in prizes. But, my Lords, the money advertisement was not taken down. The one announcing sixty picture prizes had been put up by the side of it, and the result of the intervention of the Board of Trade has been to make people understand that the carnival has two attractions—£10,000 to be drawn for in money prizes, and sixty picture prizes. As a matter of fact, the Board of Trade can only deal with the Art Union; there is a third body issuing these advertisements by the thousand, over whom, as I understand, the Board of Trade have no control at all; and, if that is so, it is their own doing, because they have let this thing go out of their hands by the very large and, as I think, unwise concessions which they have made.

I think I have said enough about these advertisements to show that it is contrary to public morals that this sort of thing should be allowed to go on. If the answer of the Board of Trade is that the Board is powerless to deal with the situation, then the logical answer of this House will be that the Board of Trade ought also to be rendered powerless to create such a situation; and if the answer is that the only remedy is a prosecution, then I hope this House will take the view that not we in Bristol, but those who created the situation, should enter the action. I am perfectly certain that the Board of Trade must have been heartily sick of this whole thing long ago, and wishes it had never been so foolish as to abate by one single jot the stiff restrictions contained in the rules. If nothing is done there certainly will be a rush, unless charity organisations are less wide-awake than I think they are, of applications to the Board of Trade to do the same thing for other towns which have infirmaries in debt. I do at least expect this from the Board of Trade, that they will give to the House this assurance, that this experiment, which has led to such disastrous results, will never be made again.

Lord Bishop of Bristol.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: My Lords, before the representative of His Majesty's Government answers the Question which has been put to him by my right rev. brother, I desire briefly to supplement what he has said with reference to this case. I venture to do so because for more than forty-two years I have been personally very closely associated with the municipal life of the city of Bristol, and during the whole of that period, both in regard to the management of this great institution and kindred institutions, I have been led to admire the dignity and highmindedness of those who have conducted the municipal affairs of that city. Having still this close connection with the city of Bristol, I feel that the leading citizens do well to be angry at this gambling project. I venture to say that it is a danger to the standard of public morals that this should take place.

I need hardly say more than what has already been said by the Bishop of Bristol as to the opinion of the most highly-respected citizens of Bristol on this matter. Not only have the representatives of the Church of England taken action, but Nonconformist feeling has also been aroused. I hold in my hand a letter from the leader of the Nonconformist bodies in Bristol, the Rev. Arnold Thomas. I might also quote other persons. The Dean of Bristol has felt himself obliged to withdraw from his connection with the infirmary as vice-president. Again, I find that Sir Edward Fry, formerly a Lord Justice of Appeal, who is universally known and honoured, has also withdrawn his support from the infirmary in consequence of this. I do not venture to say what his view may be on the legal question, but I have here some very strong words of his on the moral aspect of the matter which I will read to the House, because the opinion of Sir Edward Fry on a question of this kind is no ordinary opinion. He says—

"There are two evils which stare us in the face in our country to-day—gambling, and the association of frivolity and vanity with works of charity, and to license such a project as that of the Bristol Infirmary is to foster both these evils."

I venture to think that words of that kind from such a quarter deserve to be

carefully weighed by the Board of Trade. I was not aware that the assent of the Board of Trade had been finally and formally given, but I venture to plead that if it has been it ought not to have been given. I have no doubt at all that it must have been given in perfect good faith, but I venture to say that it was given on imperfect information. I cannot conceive its having been given except on inadequate and misleading information. Unfortunately, this great institution has fallen into hands different from those that used to manage it, and here we have the first fruits in this immense carnival with bills such as the Lord Bishop has described flaunted all over Bristol—bills such as we have been in the habit of receiving through the post from such places as Hamburg and Middelburg, but such as I have never seen before in any respectable portion of English life.

I would venture to draw your Lordships' attention a little more closely to the Act of 1846. It is an Act which a mere layman like myself may fairly claim to understand, and, as I understand it, it simply exempts Art Unions under certain conditions from the operation of the Lotteries Act. It is an Act giving privileges and exemptions on certain conditions. Under it drawings for works of art may be allowed amongst *bona fide* members of the Art Union. The persons who take part must be members of the Art Union, and the exemption is then to continue—

"only so long as their proceedings are carried on in good faith for the encouragement of the Fine Arts."

Further, they must have obtained a Charter, and it is provided in the Act—

"that whenever it shall appear that any such association is perverted from the purposes of this Act"—

the purposes being the encouragement of the Fine Arts in good faith—

"the fact is to be certified to His Majesty, and it shall be lawful to revoke or annul the Charter."

It seems to me—of course, I express my opinion with no little hesitation in the presence of noble and learned Lords—that the Art Union of Bristol has imperilled its Charter by this gambling project. This cannot be described as anything less than a barefaced gambling project,

and I cannot but feel that the Board of Trade must have acted on improper information. Therefore, before the noble Duke answers for the Government, I venture to appeal to him to give the matter further and fresh consideration under the advice of the highest legal authority. I desire to associate myself with everything that the Lord Bishop of Bristol has said as to the deplorable results of a scheme of this kind flung into the life of a great city, and I do trust that something may be done so that the persons who have obtained the management of this affair shall not snap their fingers at an Act of this kind and go shameless, apparently, and unrepentant in face of the best sentiment of that great city.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, the right rev. Prelates have certainly an advantage over me, inasmuch as they are better acquainted than I am with the local opinion and views on this question. I could not help feeling, in listening to the right rev. Prelate who raised this question, that he regarded the Board of Trade not in a very kindly or friendly light, and he seemed to have in his mind the impression that the Board of Trade had connived with the local authorities at Bristol in carrying out what he considered was an illegal act.

THE LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL: It was not in my mind. If it was in my expression I am very sorry.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I am glad to hear the right rev. Prelate disclaim any idea that the Board of Trade desired to associate themselves with a body of Bristol gentlemen in carrying out any kind of lottery coming under the Lotteries Act. The right rev. Prelate has stated the story pretty amply to your Lordships, and I do not think I need go over the history of the case except to allude to one or two brief points in connection with it. As the right rev. Prelate pointed out, at the beginning of this year the Art Union at Bristol reminded the Board of Trade that there was going to be a carnival in that city,

Lord Bishop of Hereford.

the proceeds of which were to be devoted to the Bristol Royal Infirmary, and they asked the permission of the Board of Trade to make an arrangement with the carnival committee, the arrangement being this, that 20 per cent. of the entrance money taken at the carnival should be given to the Art Union. Those people who bought entrance tickets were not only to get admission to the carnival but they were to be entitled also to use those tickets as tickets for the pictures which had to be raffled for. That proposal was made to the Board of Trade, and after due consideration the Board gave their consent to it. I do not know the local opinion on this matter, but I should assume that the Art Union said that the arrangement would be one which would bring very prominently before the notice of the people in that locality the advantages of the Art Union, and that a certain amount, perhaps an increased amount, would go to the Art Union; and in so far as these considerations are worth anything, they must have been of benefit to the Art Union. The public would not in any way suffer; because not only would they, after paying their shilling, get the advantage of admission to the carnival, but they would have the additional privilege of drawing possibly a favourable number in the lottery, it being remembered that the lottery was for prizes in the shape of pictures. I understand that the right rev. Prelate considers that arrangement to be an illegal one.

THE LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL: Not quite as you put it, but as I put it.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: These prizes which were to be raffled for were picture prizes, the product, I presume, of artists in and around the town of Bristol, and therefore it was perfectly clear that the aim of the Art Union was a *bona fide* aim, and it was not their desire in any way to associate themselves with the carnival committee in carrying out a proceeding which could in any way be termed illegal. That was the condition of affairs to which the Board of Trade assented. They did so, believing that they were perfectly within the law in doing so, and

I am informed that they have no reason to alter their view upon that point. The Board of Trade believed that the arrangement between the carnival committee and the Fine Art committee was in good faith and for the encouragement of the Fine Arts. Then, as the right rev. Prelate reminded your Lordships, this happened. A munificent gentleman, for reasons best known to himself, suggested that if anybody did not like winning a picture he would keep the picture himself and give the money value thereof to the individual who won the prize. Then at once objections were raised. Many persons pointed out that if that course was carried into effect, the proposal to redeem these picture prizes by money would be illegal, and I understand that the right rev. Prelate joined in that protest. This came to the knowledge of the Board of Trade and they at once suggested that the proposal which this munificent gentleman had made should be withdrawn. There was considerable correspondence in the matter. The Fine Art Union replied that the gentleman was not a member of their society, and that therefore they could take no action in the matter, and they denied responsibility. However, as the right rev. Prelate has informed the House, the offer was eventually withdrawn; but he forgot to tell the House that the offer was withdrawn as the direct result of the strong representations made by the Board of Trade itself.

THE LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL: I did not forget to mention it. I did not know it.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: Matters were in this condition when further complications arose, as we have been reminded to-night, by the fact that many peculiar advertisements were published, presumably by the carnival committee. His Majesty's Government certainly join with the right rev. Prelate in deploring those advertisements. I think they were very silly ones. I cannot believe that they could have been in any way likely to add to the sources of revenue of the carnival committee. The advertisements were brought to the notice of the Board of

Trade, who saw that people in Bristol were trying to advertise money prizes instead of picture prizes. At once strong representations were made by the Board of Trade, and these people were told that their action was irregular and that they must alter their advertisements and put them in correct form. A reply was received by the Board of Trade stating that new posters had been issued in which full prominence was given to the fact that the prizes were picture prizes and not money prizes. Although I can quite understand the right rev. Prelate disapproving of many of the incidents connected with this affair, I think he ought to look with a favourable view upon the action which the Board of Trade have taken in this matter, unless, of course, he objects to the fact that the Board of Trade allowed the Fine Art Union to make any agreement at all with the carnival committee. But, in doing that, I understand they were acting legally within their powers under the Act.

The right rev. Prelate will no doubt wish to know exactly the attitude of the Board of Trade at the present moment on this matter. I understand that they have invited the Art Union to disclaim the injudicious act of the carnival committee, and as the Board of Trade think that the Art Union has to a certain extent been the victim of the carnival committee, they do not consider that there is enough evidence to warrant their cancelling the authority which they gave them. But, as the right rev. Prelate pointed out, it is open to anyone who desires to get a decision upon this matter to go to the local Courts of Law and ask whether the advertisements which have been issued by the carnival committee do or do not constitute an infringement of the law. The right rev. Prelate suggested that the Board of Trade should do this. The Board of Trade do not consider that their duties extend thus far, and if local feeling in Bristol is very strong on this matter, I think the Board of Trade will be wise in leaving it to those who are more conversant with these matters, and who feel the more strongly about them, to bring any action they deem necessary.

LORD DAVEY: My Lords, it was not my intention to take part at all in this debate, but there were some observations in the noble Duke's reply which I cannot allow to pass without some comment. I did not understand the right rev. Prelate to have suggested, and I am sure he would disclaim any such idea, that the Board of Trade connived with the unfortunate and ill-advised committee of this carnival in setting up the wholly illegal lottery which they appear to have done. But I must point out to the noble Duke that it was solely in consequence of the regulations issued by the Board of Trade that the committee of the carnival were able to do it. It was the Board of Trade which alone enabled them to do it, because the regulations of the Board of Trade authorised the committee of the Art Union to allow persons who were not members of the Art Union to compete for their prizes.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: The Act runs "members, subscribers, or contributors."

LORD DAVEY: That is so. The Board of Trade allowed persons who merely paid their gate-money to go into the Zoological Gardens to compete for these prizes. They had no power to do that, in my mind. That a man who pays gate-money to be admitted to a carnival at which a public lottery is advertised to take place should be supposed thereby to be a contributor or subscriber to an Art Union within the meaning of the Act is a supposition which I should not have thought would have entered into the head of any person. I do not in the least degree suggest that the Board of Trade saw the consequences of what they were doing; but still their action in allowing persons who, in my judgment, were in no sense either members, subscribers, or contributors, to compete for prizes has led to what seems to be admitted by the noble Duke himself to be unfortunate and illegal proceedings.

THE LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL: My Lords, if I have a right of reply, I should like to say—

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): The right rev. Prelate has no right of reply, but he may make an explanation.

THE LORD BISHOP OF BRISTOL: The noble Duke said that in consequence of strong representations by the Board of Trade an answer was received that posters calling special attention to the fact that the prizes were to be pictures were issued. That is quite true, but those posters were put up side by side with those announcing £10,000 prizes in money, so, as I pointed out, there is now a double attraction. The objectionable tickets to which I have called attention are still being circulated, and it appears to me that the Board of Trade have practically done nothing by their last step.

EARL SPENCER: I would appeal to the noble Marquess the Leader of the House as to whether this matter should not be referred back to the Board of Trade. I think it is clear from the remarks of my noble and learned friend that they seem, no doubt unwittingly, to have done something irregular. A great Department ought to be very careful in a matter of this kind, and I think it would be as well that it should be referred back to them to see whether, after all, they have not connived at what is an illegality.

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE):** My Lords, I think the noble Duke, in the course of his speech, admitted very frankly that these proceedings had been of a most irregular and improper description. With a very worthy object in view the Bristol Art Union appears to have entered into an ill-advised association with another body which, actuated no doubt by philanthropic motives, seems to have, if a layman may express a view, gone perilously near breaking the law. I gather from the noble Duke that the matter has been, to some extent at any rate, corrected, because it has now been decided that the persons who win these prizes are to receive works of art and not money.

LORD DAVEY: But they are not members of the society.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The right rev. Prelate however suggested to us that the parties concerned were, in spite of the remonstrances which had been addressed to them by the Board of Trade, persisting in their irregular conduct. If that is so, I have no doubt that my noble friend will represent to the Board of Trade what has fallen from noble Lords during the course of this debate, and that the matter will be looked into further as suggested by the noble Earl opposite.

LIFE-SAVING APPARATUS ON BRITISH SHIPS.

LORD MUSKERRY rose to ask His Majesty's Government whether they have been made aware of the decision of the Board of Trade Inquiry which investigated the circumstances of the loss of the trawler "*Banffshire*;" whether, previous to her leaving Aberdeen she was inspected by a Board of Trade surveyor competent to survey her compasses and life-saving apparatus, and, if not, why not; also to call attention to the general question of the surveying of life-saving apparatus on British merchant ships. He said: My Lords, my Question, also, has reference to the Board of Trade. Up to the present I had thought that, with the exception of the Marine Department, the departments of that Board were nearly immaculate; but I find I was mistaken.

I think that you will agree with me that any matter which concerns the efficiency or otherwise of life-saving apparatus on board our merchant ships is worthy of our careful attention. We have to feel thankful for the institution of the Acts relating to life-saving appliances, as it is now the duty, not of private individuals, but of the State, to ensure that both our mariners and passengers sailing on the high seas should be provided with adequate and efficient means of escape in time of disaster. I have on previous occasions drawn attention to serious defects which exist in the manner in which the Board of Trade carries out the law in this respect, and,

consequently, it is not surprising that through want of proper official supervision the life-saving apparatus, consisting of boats, life-buoys, life-belts, and other things, in many merchant ships is often a source of danger to human life instead of being a source of safety.

To refer to the case mentioned in my Question I find that the Board of Trade Inquiry into the loss of the "*Banffshire*" attached blame to the manager for the owners of the vessel in not seeing that, before she left Aberdeen, she was provided with good and properly-adjusted compasses and sufficient life-saving appliances. There was only one life-buoy, which was useless, and there were no life-belts on board. I see that the master of the trawler was fined £10. Now, my Lords, it is all very well to fine an individual or individuals for being privy to or taking a vessel to sea and jeopardising the lives on board in such a scandalous way, but what I want to know is, what have the Marine Department of the Board of Trade to say in their own defence in themselves permitting such a vessel to go to sea? They are supposed to have a proper staff of expert surveyors who, under the Merchant Shipping Act, have certain duties and certain powers vested in them to prevent this sort of thing. From what I understand from statements of officials of the Board of Trade, it is not possible, nor, they say, is it found necessary for their surveyors to inspect the life-saving appliances of every vessel which is about to proceed to sea. One can hardly have much confidence in statements of this character when we see this case of the "*Banffshire*" which was possessed of one useless life-buoy, and no life-belts. Furthermore, I have contended that it is imperative to increase the number of the surveyors at our different sea-ports so that proper inspection of life-saving apparatus can be carried on.

The Royal Commission on Unseaworthy Ships stated in their Report in 1874 that some additional nautical assistance was requisite for the due performance of the duties now entrusted to the Board. The Marine Department of the Board, however, has, as it usually does with recommendations of Committees or

Commissions of the kind, ignored it, and the nautical assistance nowadays is even less than it was then. I would point out to your Lordship's that the nautical surveyors to the Board of Trade are less in number than they were in the year 1876, although the tonnage of British foreign-going vessels entered and cleared with cargoes and in ballast at ports in the United Kingdom has increased by over 20,000,000 tons. Throughout the whole of the United Kingdom there are fifteen nautical surveyors only. Your Lordships will, therefore, see that at many ports there is no nautical assistance at all.

In addition to these few nautical surveyors I should inform your Lordships that there are also what are termed engineer and shipwright surveyors, and these number 104. In advocating an increase in the staff of nautical surveyors, I do not wish to minimise in the slightest degree the importance of the services carried on by engineers and shipwrights—that is, in their own particular department. What I contend is that the Board of Trade have no right to relegate to these gentlemen duties which do not come within their sphere, and in which they have no practical experience. For instance, it would be ridiculous to ask a British merchant captain to undertake duties relating to the survey of a ship's hull or her engines, and so it is equally ridiculous for the Board of Trade to expect their engineer and shipwright surveyors to supervise in an expert way such technical matters as ship's boats, their tackle, and their masts.

Under the rules relating to the Life-Saving Appliances Acts these boats must be fitted with a mast or masts, with at least one good sail, and proper gear, and also with an efficient compass. Sea-anchors must also be provided. The lowering apparatus of the boats should be carefully overhauled, and the compasses and other navigational appliances of the ship herself should be inspected. All these matters can only be thoroughly and practically attended to by men possessing long nautical experience. I would ask your Lordships, is it not reprehensible, in the interests of the safety of life at sea, that such duties

should be handed over to engineers and shipwrights? To furnish an illustration. The Board of Trade inquiry into the loss of the "Banffshire" attached blame to the manager for the own rs in not seeing, amongst other things, that the vessel was provided with good and properly-adjusted compasses. As I have said before, the primary responsibility for this rests with the officials of the Board of Trade, but, in all probability, even had the ship been inspected by a Board of Trade surveyor, it is almost certain that these very compasses would have been inspected, or have been alleged to have been inspected, by an engineer or shipwright. I understand that there is only one nautical surveyor in the whole of Scotland, and he, I believe, is in Glasgow.

The Board of Trade, in defence of what is an indefensible system, say that their newly-appointed surveyors are instructed in duties such as the surveying of boats, compasses, etc., by the more experienced surveyors in their service. This is tantamount to saying that the men they appoint do not know how to survey boats and such like. The still more curious part of it is that those who instruct these young surveyors are most probably engineers and shipwrights themselves, and consequently theorists at the work. I hope no word I have said will be taken as against engineers or shipwrights, for I have a sincere admiration for them both as men and as officials. In this matter it is not their fault, but their misfortune, that the Board of Trade should cause them to perform duties in which they have had no practical experience. In these matters, which affect what I may call the safety conditions of our merchant cargo and passenger ships, I always like to obtain, if I can, the views of those serving on board of them. It is oftentimes very difficult to obtain such views, as our mariners are afraid to express themselves individually, and Parliament does not give them the means to have a direct representative voice in the Legislature. I can, however, give your Lordships the collective views of over 12,000 captains and officers of the merchant service who are embodied in the Merchant Service Guild. It is, they say with regret, a fact that the life-saving apparatus on board far

Lord Muskerry.

too many ships is in a woefully bad condition, and they comment very strongly on the deplorable condition of the boats, buoys, and belts, and other life-saving and navigational appliances which are provided.

I understand that since the "General Slocum" disaster happened in New York, the American marine authorities have issued very strict regulations on this subject of life-saving apparatus, and British ships are required to conform to them equally with their own. I have heard, for instance, on the best authority, that one of our newest and largest liners has been made to carry two additional boats, her fire-hose was required to stand an additional 100 pounds pressure, and her life-belts had to be made more durable and satisfactory. What I am endeavouring to prevent is a "General Slocum" disaster to one of our own ships, when we would see what public opinion would be and would do. I do not wish to strike a note of alarm, but I have no hesitation in saying that the Life-saving Appliance Acts are not efficiently carried out for the reasons I have adduced. I hope that your Lordships will approve of my action in endeavouring to press this matter and to urge that the Marine Department of the Board of Trade should have due and proper regard to the duties and responsibilities imposed upon them by the sections of the Merchant Shipping Act which deal with life-saving appliances on board ship. Were any of your Lordships in need of medical or surgical assistance, would you trust yourselves to a gentleman whose knowledge of medicine and surgery was derived from reading books and from what he was told by other gentlemen, and who had had practically no experience? I do not think you would. I beg to put the Question standing in my name.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH: I will not follow the noble Lord into the various matters which he has raised during the course of his speech. I am sure he would rather that I confined myself to one or two of the main points upon which he is anxious for information.

The noble Lord has asked the Board of Trade whether the "Banffshire" was inspected before she left port, and whether the compasses and life-saving apparatus were examined as well. The reply to that is in the negative. The ship was not examined, for the simple reason that there is no obligation on the part of the authorities to examine a ship of that class.

LORD MUSKERRY: The "Banffshire" is over 80 tons register.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I am coming to that in a moment. If the noble Lord had refreshed his memory on the Merchant Shipping Act he would have discovered that the "Banffshire," to which he rightly attaches importance, could not be described as a vessel—it was only a registered fishing-boat. She was a very small boat indeed, and never carried any passengers on board; consequently there was no need at all that all this life-saving apparatus to which the noble Lord alluded should be carried. If he will turn to the Merchant Shipping Act he will see that all that was necessary for this particular ship to carry in the way of life-saving apparatus was a single boat. There is no need for craft under a certain size to carry life-belts or any other kind of life-saving apparatus except a boat. It is true that the "Banffshire" only had one life-belt, but she had a boat in accordance with the Merchant Shipping Act, and as this fishing-smack had conformed to the law, there was no need to examine her before she left port. If the noble Lord will look into the matter a little more closely he will see that all the rules and regulations with regard to these small fishing-smacks were complied with.

LORD MUSKERRY: The "Banffshire" was a steam trawler.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I understand that her proper description is not that of a steam trawler but a registered fishing-boat. Then the noble Lord suggested that the compasses of this particular boat ought to have been examined and their correctness certified.

LORD MUSKERRY: I do not suggest that. I said that the Board of Trade's own inquiry said it should have been done.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: The result of the Board of Trade Inquiry was that the manager was blamed for not having adjusted his compasses. It is the duty of the manager to do that. The Board of Trade has not a sufficient number of officials to see that every compass in every little fishing-boat is properly adjusted. That would require an amount of supervision which no Department of the State could possibly be prepared to undertake. The noble Lord may think that this vessel ought to have had some life-saving apparatus upon it; he may say that it ought to have had more life-belts and other machinery for saving life; and if he thinks that advisable I should not quarrel with his suggestion in the least. If he would like the Board of Trade, the next time the regulations are framed, to examine into this matter I dare say they will take a suggestion of that sort seriously into consideration. I hope the noble Lord will see that several of the points he put forward should not be given quite the same amount of importance which he desires your Lordships to attach to them.

Let me deal for one brief moment with the larger question of surveying all life-saving apparatus on British merchant ships. The noble Lord is aware that provision for life-saving apparatus on British merchant ships is carefully laid down in various sections in the Merchant Shipping Act. It is specifically laid down that the onus of maintaining in proper order all the appliance for life-saving shall rest on the master and owners of the ship. That is a principle which is definitely laid down, and I do not think it is one which the noble Lord will quarrel with. Furthermore, a penalty can be inflicted for non-compliance with these regulations. I rather gathered from the remarks of the noble Lord that he thinks the regulations require revision.

LORD MUSKERRY: Hear, hear!

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: If the noble Lord is under that impression—and, of course, it is a view which he is perfectly entitled to hold—I would point out to him that under the Merchant Shipping Act all such rules made under the Act have to be laid before Parliament as soon as may be after they are made, and cannot come into operation until they have been laid for forty days on the Table of both Houses of Parliament during the sittings of Parliament. The noble Lord has been a Member of your Lordships' House for a considerable number of years, and surely if the regulations were in his opinion inadequate, or not good ones, he has had an opportunity in previous years of commenting upon them.

LORD MUSKERRY: I have done so.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: So much for the rules and regulations and the penalties under them. The noble Lord is equally dissatisfied with the inspection employed to secure that the rules and regulations are carried into effect. I understand that it is quite impracticable for inspectors to make a systematic inspection before the voyage of every ship leaving dock. The system adopted is that the officials of the Board of Trade visit vessels wherever opportunity arises and call attention to any defects they find and to anything not in accordance with the rules and regulations laid down in the Merchant Shipping Act. Moreover, if these defects are not at once rectified and the protests of the Board of Trade paid attention to, they have it in their power to detain the ships until the rules and regulations have been complied with by the owners. I think the noble Lord must admit that there is a considerable amount of supervision employed by those who are responsible for carrying out the rules and regulations made under the Merchant Shipping Act. I will give an instance in support of my contention. During the last four months 674 vessels have been visited and examined by the officers of the Department at the port of Liverpool, and in seventy-eight cases the life-saving appliances were found defective and ordered to be put straight. That is a concrete instance to show that great care is taken to protect

people who are passengers on board these ships from carelessness or insufficient control on the part of those responsible for seeing that there is an adequate amount of life-saving apparatus on board. With regard to passenger steamships, the noble Lord is aware that the surveyors are bound to inspect the appliances at each annual survey for the renewal of passenger certificates; they will not pass any ship for a renewal of her passenger certificate unless that ship has complied with all regulations laid down in the Merchant Shipping Act. I do not think I can give the noble Lord any further information, but I do think he ought to admit that the Board of Trade has taken every precaution to safeguard the lives of those who travel on British ships.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL [H.L.]

[THIRD READING.]

Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^a."
—(*Lord Davey*.)

On Question, Bill read 3^a.

LORD DAVEY said the Amendment standing in his name on the Paper was for the object of removing ambiguities in Section 4 of the principal Act which related to sub-contracting. He begged to move the Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, pages 3 and 4, to leave out the whole clause and to insert, 'Section 4 of the principal Act (which relates to sub-contracting) shall be repealed, and in lieu thereof the following section shall be substituted:—(1) Where any person, being an undertaker within the meaning of this Act (in this section referred to as the principal) contracts with any person (in this section referred to as the contractor) for the execution by or under the contractor of any work, and the principal would, if such work were executed by workmen immediately employed by him, be liable to pay compensation under this Act to those workmen in respect of any accident arising out of and in the course of their employment, the principal shall be liable to pay to any workman employed by the contractor in the execution of the work

any compensation which he would have been liable to pay if the workman had been immediately employed by him; and where proceedings are taken against the principal, then in the application of this Act references to the principal shall be substituted for references to the employer, except in the provisions relating to the amount of compensation. Provided that the principal shall be entitled to be indemnified by the person by whom the workman was immediately employed and by any intermediate contractor, and any intermediate contractor called on to indemnify the principal shall be entitled to be indemnified by the person by whom the workman was immediately employed, and by any contractor intermediate between him and that person, and so on, and any such indemnity shall, in accordance with rules of Court, be enforceable in a County Court. (2) Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing a workman recovering compensation under this Act from the contractor instead of the principal, if the contractor is an undertaker within the meaning of this Act. (3) This section shall not apply to any contract with any person for the execution by or under the contractor of any work which is merely ancillary or incidental to and is no part of or process in the trade or business carried on by the principal, nor shall it apply in any case where the accident occurred elsewhere than on, or in, or about the premises, work, or building in respect of which the principal is the undertaker within the meaning of this Act.'"

(*Lord Davey*.)

LORD BELPER: I admit that the Amendment which has just been proposed by the noble and learned Lord does not alter the sense of the clause in any way. It, no doubt, does away with some of the ambiguity which he complained of in the former stage, and as the Government think it will improve the Bill we are very glad to accept it.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, I only wish to say, before this Bill leaves your Lordships' House, that I opposed legislation of this character in 1895 on the ground that it tended to lower wages. About two years ago I met a great supporter of this legislation and pointed out to him that the plain English of it is that 100 or 1,000 men employed in a factory receive less wages on the off-chance that one of them may lose a finger. "That is true," was the reply, "but the men do not know it." I answered that it would be my business to make it known to the men, and, therefore, I hope this

short observation will be reported in the public Press in the morning.

Drafting Amending agreed to.

Moved, "That the Bill do now pass."—
(*Lord Davey.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to, and Bill sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at five minutes
before Eight o'clock, till To-
morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 29th May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [Lords]; Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords]; Leven's Patent Bill [Lords]; Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Tees Valley Water

The Earl of Wemyss.

Board Bill [Lords]; Weaver Navigation Bill [Lords].

Ordered: That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof; the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Order (No. 16) Bill.

Ordered; That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill. Lords Amendment considered, and agreed to.

South Metropolitan Gas Bill. Lords Amendment considered, and agreed to.

Bolton Corporation Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

North Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That Standing Orders 204 and 235 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read a second time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Bill accordingly read a second time, and committed.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (No. 2) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House Copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with the Documents deposited in the case, of Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords].—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*)

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords]; and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Mr Attorney-General.*)

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill. Second Reading deferred from Friday till Friday, 9th June.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill; Clacton Improvement [Lords]. Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Clay Cross Railway (Abandonment) Bill; Great Berkhamstead Gas Bill, without Amendment.

Amendments to—Mexborough and Swinton Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Education under the Education Acts, 1870 to 1903, to enable the London County Council to

put in force the Lands Clauses Acts." [Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 2) Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for incorporating and conferring powers upon a Joint Committee of the Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies; for leasing certain railways of the Metropolitan Company; for confirming an agreement between the two companies in relation thereto; and for other purposes." [Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Portsmouth Street Tramways Company to construct additional Tramways in the urban district of Gosport and Alverstoke, and street works in that district and in the urban district of Fareham, in the county of Southampton; and for other purposes." [Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time limited for the completion of the tramways, light railways, and works authorised to be constructed by the Hastings Tramways Company and to revive the powers for the compulsory purchase of land by that Company, and to authorise the construction of certain deviations of their authorised light railways and other works; and for other purposes." [Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords.]]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time for taking lands for the construction of certain tramways, widenings, and works authorised by the South Lancashire Tramways Acts, 1900 and 1901; to abandon certain tramways authorised by the Act of 1900; and for other purposes." [South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords.]]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Great Central Railway Company to establish a Pension Fund and guarantee pensions for the benefit of their salaried officers and clerks; to alter, modify, and repeal certain provisions of the Acts relating to the Railway Clearing System Superannuation Fund Corporation; and for other purposes." [Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [Lords.]]

Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords]. That they communicate Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings taken upon the Second Reading of Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords], as desired by this House, with a request that the same may be returned.

Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [Lords]; Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords]; Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 2) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 230.]

Metropolitan Pneumatic Despatch Bill. Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Rochdale; and Hartlepool; to lie upon the Table.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Petition from Barton Hill, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

Petition from Newport (Mon.), for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE AND EXECUTOR BILL.

Petition of the Royal Exchange Assurance Corporation, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Petition from Greenock, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Newbury, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.

Petition from Rochdale, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of Messrs. F. H. Dale and T. A. Stephens, His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Board of Education, on Intermediate Education in Ireland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GAS AND WATER WORKS FACILITIES ACT, 1870.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade as to dispensing with the consents of the South Hayling Parish Council and the North Hayling Parish Meeting in the case of the Hayling Island Gas Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 177.]

RAILWAYS (CERTIFICATES) (EWELL AND LONG GROVE RAILWAY).

Copy presented, of Draft Certificate of the Board of Trade authorising the construction of a Railway from Ewell to Long Grove [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (INCOME AND EXPENDITURE).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address May 25th; *Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 178.]

INCOME-TAX ASSESSMENTS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered May 18th; *Sir George Bartley*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 179.]

ARMY (SPECIAL PENSIONS).

Copy presented, of Return for the year ended March 31st, 1905, of Pensions

specially granted under Articles 730, 1173A, and 1207 of the Army Pay Warrant [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3383 and 3384 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Visit of Local Government Board Medical Inspector to Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate, in view of the statement contained in the report of the County Medical Officer of Health for Ross and Cromarty concerning the insanitary condition of the Island of Lewis, will he state when the Local Government Board's medical inspector proposes to visit the island.

(Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.) The medical inspector and inspecting officer of the Local Government Board visited the Island of Lewis in April and inspected a number of townships. Their report is now under the consideration of the Board.

Escape of Trawler "Roi des Belges" from Stornoway.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that, although an arrestment was put on the trawler "Roi des Belges" when she put into Stornoway during the week ending May 6th, she was allowed to leave the day following that on which she arrived; and will he state briefly the circumstances of the case.

(Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.) An arrestment was put on the "Roi des Belges" when she put into Stornoway with her main steam-pipe broken; after the repair of the pipe, arrangements had been made for taking coal on board next

day. The vessel, however, slipped out to sea in the early hours of the morning without the coal. The arrestment was at the instance of the law agent for certain fishermen whose nets had been damaged outside the three-mile limit, and was executed to found jurisdiction, but no citation could be placed in the hands of the master owing to his sudden departure.

Withdrawals from Post Office Savings Banks.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the number of withdrawals from the Post Office Savings Bank by telegraph for each year since the system has been introduced, and the number of telegraph notices of withdrawal during the same period.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) The number of withdrawals made from the Post Office Savings Bank by telegraph and by return of post respectively during each year since the introduction of the systems were as follows:—

(1).—Withdrawals by Telegraph.

Year.	Number.
1893 (Dec. 1st to Dec. 31st)	978
1894 - - - - -	44,163
1895 - - - - -	72,431
1896 - - - - -	94,477
1897 - - - - -	117,507
1898 - - - - -	141,783
1899 - - - - -	161,190
1900 - - - - -	167,389
1901 - - - - -	192,308
1902 - - - - -	220,032
1903 - - - - -	215,416
1904 - - - - -	211,977

(2).—Withdrawals by Return of Post.

Year.	Number.
1893 (Dec. 1st to Dec. 31st)	250
1894 - " - " - "	4,843
1895 - " - " - "	6,387
1896 - " - " - "	8,076
1897 - " - " - "	9,389
1898 - " - " - "	10,563
1899 - " - " - "	11,405
1900 - " - " - "	11,609
1901 - " - " - "	13,108
1902 - " - " - "	14,351
1903 - " - " - "	15,149
1904 - " - " - "	15,596

Punishment for Errors in Registered Letter Division, East Central District Office.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will cause an inquiry to be made into the punishment awarded to sorters in the Registered Letter Division, East Central District Office, for errors of duty apart from discipline cases, as compared with the punishment awarded generally to officers in the East Central Sorting Office, to ascertain whether such punishment results from the high pressure at which the registered letter sorters work, owing to inadequate provision of force.

{Answered by Lord Stanley.} The hon. Member is in error in supposing that a case for inquiry is established by the fact that a larger proportion of errors deserving punishment appears to exist among the sorters in the Registered Letter Division than in the sorting office of the East Central District. The explanation of the discrepancy is merely that the system under which registered letters are checked from hand to hand

brings errors of carelessness to light; while in the sorting office, where ordinary mails are dealt with, similar opportunities of fixing the responsibility for errors do not exist. I am satisfied that the force employed is not inadequate.

Promotion in the Postal Service.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can specify any instances in the postal service, other than postmen in the London postal service, in which officers are systematically promoted over an intervening class.

{Answered by Lord Stanley.} The hon. Member is in error in supposing that postmen in the London postal service are systematically promoted over an intervening class. Such a procedure does not exist in any part of the Post Office.

Appointments for Male Learners in Dublin Post Office.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether any appointments have been made in Ireland since the last examination in Dublin for male learners; and whether he can state why the examination was held if there were no vacancies.

{Answered by Lord Stanley.} The answer to the first part of the hon. Member's Question is in the affirmative. In order that vacancies, when they occur, may be filled without delay it is necessary to hold examinations in advance of the vacancies. I regret that the probable number of vacancies was in this instance, as I informed the hon. Member on the 22nd instant,† over-estimated.

Promotion of Men with Less than Twenty Years Service to Chief Inspectorships in the Metropolitan Police Force.

SIR SAMUEL SCOTT (Marylebone, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many men belonging to the Metropolitan police force, having less than twenty years service, have been promoted to chief inspectorships during the last ten years.

{Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.} Twenty-one men of the

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlvi., 947.

Metropolitan police force, having less than twenty years service, have been promoted to chief inspectorships during the last ten years.

Importation of Crew from Antwerp to man the "Oakwood."

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that a crew of sailors and firemen were brought from the port of Antwerp to the West India Dock, London, to join the British steamship "Oakwood," and that these men had to pay to a shipping master at Antwerp six francs each for a berth; and whether, in view of the number of sailors and firemen unemployed in London at the present moment, he will cause inquiries to be made as to the circumstances under which this crew was brought to London.

(Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.) The Board of Trade have made inquiries and the facts are, I believe, as stated in the Question. The Board of Trade have no power to interfere in the matter, but I may say that the present current rate of wages is higher in London than at Antwerp.

Cost of Seamen's Outfits and Ordnance purchased for the Navy and Royal Marines and Fleet Reserves.

MR. COGAN (Wicklow, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state the cost of the seamen's clothing, boots, other articles of outfit, small arms and ammunition, material for manufacture of ordnance, and explosives, respectively, purchased for the Navy and Royal Marine and Fleet Reserves for the year 1904-5.

(Answered by Mr. Pretymann.) The information asked for appears to be available in the Navy Estimates of last year, Votes 2 and 9; but if the hon. Member desires any further particulars which can be prepared without undue clerical labour I will endeavour to supply them.

Cost of Stationery and Printing for Parliament and Public Departments.

MR. COGAN: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state the cost of the stationery and other paper, printing, parchment and vellum, books

and maps, stationery and paper for both Houses of Parliament, printing and binding for same, and other paper and printing respectively, purchased for the Public Departments of the Civil Service supplied through His Majesty's Stationery Office and otherwise for the year 1904-5, or for the previous year.

(Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.)

The figures of expenditure from Stationery Office Votes on account of Parliament and Public Departments in the year 1903-4, as appearing in the Appropriation Account for the year, are as follows:—

For Public Departments.—

Subhead E. Printing	-	-	£280,243
Subhead F. Paper	-	-	204,528
Subhead G. Parchments	-	-	8,285
Subhead H. Binding	-	-	77,908
† Subhead I. Books and Maps and Miscellaneous Stores			112,499

For Parliament:—

Subhead J.	-	-	Total	£90,196
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The accounts of the expenditure for Parliament were not kept separately under the different subheads, but the following is an approximate subdivision:—

Printing	-	-	-	£77,760
Paper	-	-	-	9,250
Parchments	-	-	-	700
Binding	-	-	-	1,250
Books and Maps and Miscellaneous Stores	-	-	-	1,236
				£90,196

The figures of Stationery Office expenditure for 1904-5 cannot yet be furnished.

Vaccination Regulations.

SIR JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the importance attached by medical vaccinator authorities to the existence of an adequate area of marks as an evidence of efficient vaccination, and in view of the practice of the Board in awarding a

† The figures for Books, etc., and Miscellaneous Stores were not kept separately until 1904-5.

bonus to public vaccinators on similar evidence of the efficiency of the vaccination work, he will consider the desirability of specifying the cicatricial area necessary to a successful vaccination, and of requiring the public vaccinators to inspect their vaccinations at the end of three months after the performance of the operation with a view to satisfying themselves that the specified area has been produced; and whether he will consider the desirability of embodying a definition of successful vaccination in the Board's instructions to vaccinators under contract, and in Form E required by the Board to be filled up by medical practitioners who are not public vaccinators.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.)

Awards are made to public vaccinators on other considerations besides the "existence" in cases vaccinated by them "of an adequate area of marks." I have no power to define successful vaccination or to prescribe the duties of private medical practitioners in the matter referred to in the Question, but I will consider to what extent it may be practicable to give effect to the hon. Member's suggestion, so far as public vaccinators are concerned, whenever it becomes necessary to revise the regulations respecting their duties.

Publication of Dr. Farrar's Report on Cases of Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis at Irthlingborough.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will publish, as a Parliamentary Paper or in the Press, the report of Dr. Farrar, the Local Government Board inspector, into the cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis at Irthlingborough, Northants; and whether he will state what steps, if any, are being taken to prevent, so far as possible, the introduction of the disease into this country and to isolate and stamp out outbreaks of this disease.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.)

Dr. Farrar's report on this subject will, I hope, shortly be completed. I propose that it should then be printed and published. Communications have been made to the medical officers of health of

the ports at which immigrants from the Continent are usually landed with a view to these officers being on the watch for the possible importation of cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis from abroad. As I stated on Thursday † last, in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for the Radcliffe Division, the Local Government Board are prepared to entertain proposals from the local authorities to make compulsory for a limited time the notification to them of cases of this disease where they deem it desirable.

Protection of Lives of British Officers Serving with Mahsuds on the Indian Frontier.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, having regard to the assassination of Captain Bowring in September, and of Lieutenant-Colonel Harman in February last, by Mahsuds enlisted for frontier defence, the Government of India is taking precautions to prevent other valuable lives from being sacrificed in the same way.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.)

The subject has engaged the very careful attention of the Government of India. Immediately on the murder of Colonel Harman, the Mahsuds in the Southern Waziristan Militia, some 400 men, about a quarter of the whole strength of the corps, were disarmed, and a full jirga of the tribe was summoned to meet the Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province. The Chief Commissioner reported that the attitude of the representatives of the tribe at the meeting was satisfactory, as also appeared to him to be the condition of the tribe as a whole. It has been decided not to reinstate the disarmed men, but to make a fresh enlistment of from 100 to 150 selected Mahsuds, for whose individual conduct the tribe would be willing, in accordance with an undertaking given at the meeting, to furnish a full guarantee. Steps are being taken to select recruits and obtain the necessary security from the tribe in the case of each of them. It should be added that the murderers in both cases were apprehended and duly executed. The state of these frontier

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlvi., 1394.

forces will be closely observed. I would take the opportunity to express my profound regret for the loss of these two officers and my appreciation of the value of their services. Captain Bowring held the important post of Political Agent in Southern Waziristan and was an officer of great promise. Lieutenant-Colonel Harman was Commandant of the Southern Waziristan Militia. The gallantry displayed by him and by Captain Plant, who without hesitation rushed unarmed upon the assailant and seized him, was the means, though Colonel Harman's life was sacrificed, of saving the lives of their brother officers who were with them at the time the attack was made, and I feel that no words of mine could add to the feeling which their devotion will excite in this House.

Conduct of Troops in Rawalpindi.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he has received any official information as to the conduct of troops in Rawalpindi after it was found that a native, charged with having killed a sergeant of the 9th Lancers and admitted to bail, had absconded; and will he state what steps the Government of India have taken in the matter.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) I am informed by the Viceroy that no occurrence has taken place upon which such a report, as that referred to by my hon. friend, could be founded.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants— Application of Patrick O'Neill.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received the application for reinstatement of Patrick O'Neill, of Inchaclough, near Cahirciveen, whose landlord is Mr. Lionel Hewson; whether he is aware that the landlord is willing to reinstate; and whether the Estates Commissioners will intervene in the matter and inquire whether the present occupier of the holding is willing to accept compensation.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The application has been received, and will

be inquired into if the estate concerned should come before the Commissioners to be dealt with.

Estimated Total Cost of Proposed College at Glasnevin.

MR. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the cost of the ground proposed to be taken in connection with the proposed transfer of the Marlborough Street College students to the residence for men and women to be erected on Colonel Lindsay's farm at Glasnevin, the estimated cost of the building for men and women, the estimated cost of furnishing this residential building for men and women students and making it ready for their occupation, and the estimated total cost of the proposed college residence for men and women students.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The cost of the site was £15,500. Tenders for the building and equipment of the new residence have not yet been considered, and the Commissioners are therefore not at present prepared to give the other information asked for.

Salary of Teacher of Mohorrough National School, Roll No 5,094.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the rate per annum upon which the salary of the teacher of Mohorrough National School, Roll No. 5,094, was calculated and paid for the quarters ending the 31st day of March, 1901, and the 30th day of June, 1901.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) Mr. McCarthy was paid at the rate of £87 per annum for the quarter ended 31st March, 1901. This rate was paid in error, as the correct rate was £85 per annum, and there has consequently been an overpayment which the teacher will be asked to refund. The payment made was intended to represent the total of his consolidated income, including residual capitation grant, under the fourth clause of the fourth schedule to the Irish Education Act of 1892. From the 1st April, 1901, the consolidated income of all teachers was divided into two

portions, and the second portion (the residual capitation grant) was paid in one sum at the end of the financial year. The other portion was paid quarterly. In the case of Mr. McCarthy the portion paid quarterly amounted to £74 per annum, and it was at this rate he was paid for the quarter ended 30th June, 1901.

Surrender to the Congested Districts Board of Holdings on the Stoney Estate, County Mayo.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the action of the Congested Districts Board in giving sums of money to landholders on the Stoney Estate, county Mayo, on condition that they would surrender their holdings; have those tenants been supplied by the Board with other holdings in return for the surrendered ones; and, if so, are the new holdings larger than the old or surrendered ones; if they have not been supplied with new and larger holdings, can he explain the action of the Board in purchasing the old ones and clearing out the tenants therefrom.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) A portion of this estate, consisting of the townland of Murrevagh (extent 200 to 300 acres), was extremely congested when the Board purchased the property. This townland was occupied by upwards of fifty tenants, each of whom held on an average from twenty to thirty separate plots. The Board purchased the interests of sixteen of these small tenants, seven of whom were aged men and women unable to work their holdings, and the remainder either had other holdings or had made up their minds to sell and leave the district. The Board have not supplied any of these persons with new holdings. The object in buying them out was to enable the Board to increase the holdings of those who remained.

Sitting of Sub-Land Commission for hearing Cases from Cork and Kinsale.

MR. CREAM (Cork, S.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say when the sittings of the Sub-Land Commissioners

for the hearing of land cases from the unions of Cork and Kinsale, and adjourned in April, will be resumed.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Cork cases on the list were disposed of at the former sitting. The hearing of the Kinsale cases will be resumed at Cork on 23rd June.

Improvement of Falchorrib Harbour.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the County Council of Donegal, at its meeting on the 23rd May, passed a resolution urging that, in view of the near approach of the herring-fishing season, the projected improvement of the harbour at Falchorrib, under the Marine Works Act, should be proceeded with at once; and whether he can now say when the work will be commenced.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have received a copy of the resolution; but I am unable to add anything to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member's Question of 4th April. †

Changes in Clones Police Force.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain what was the reason for the recent retirement of the district inspector and change of head constable in Clones; and whether it is usual to have both these officers of the one religion in the same station.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The district inspector retired on pension on his own application, and the head constable was transferred in the interests of the public service. It is not unusual that the district inspector and the head constable at a station should be of the same religion. The requirements of the service are the paramount consideration in such matters.

Cyprus.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he is now able to communicate to the House the result of the

† See (4) *Debates* cxliv., 307.

friendly intervention of the High Commissioner of Cyprus in regard to the difficulties which have arisen in that island respecting the election to the vacant Archbishopric of Cyprus and the Bishopric of Paphos.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.) I have nothing to add to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member's Question on the 1st June† last, when I stated that the High Commissioner's offer of friendly intervention in this matter had had no satisfactory result.

Cost of Outfit, Small Arms and Ammunition for Army and Auxiliary Forces.

MR. COGAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the cost of the clothing and materials for clothing, boots, small arms and ammunition, miscellaneous items of outfit, such as blankets, materials for the manufacture of ordnance, and explosives, including cordite, respectively, purchased for the Army and Auxiliary Forces for the year 1904-5.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.) The charge to Army Votes 1904-5 in respect of clothing, and material for clothing, boots, small arms and ammunition, and miscellaneous items of outfit (including camp equipment, accoutrements, and barrack, hospital, and prison stores), can only be given approximately, and may be put roughly at £2,306,000. As regards materials for the manufacture of ordnance and explosives, including cordite, purchased for the Army and Auxiliary Forces, no figures can be calculated.

Canadian Government Age Guarantees of Whisky.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has yet received a full report from the Colonial Office as to the practice of the Canadian Government in granting certificates, on the payment of a small stamp duty, to distillers and merchants endorsing the age guarantee affixed by such traders to pot-still whiskies bottled in bond, as the Excise officers know by the official books the exact time such

whiskies have been in Government custody; and, if so, whether, in the interest of the trade, the public health, and increase of the revenue, he will instruct the Excise authorities to adopt a similar practice in these countries.

(Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.) Further information has been received with regard to the practice of the Canadian Government in granting certificates, but I am informed that the Canadian system is applicable only to unblended spirits, and could not be adapted to the circumstances of trade in this country, where most of the spirit sold consists of blends of spirit of various quality and of various age.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Portland—Dismissal of Mr. Clement Millard.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether there were any complaints made against Mr. Clement Millard, superintendent civil engineer at Portland, before his dismissal; whether those complaints were inquired into by the Admiralty; and, if so, when and how; whether notice of the grounds of complaint was ever given to Mr. Millard; and whether he had an opportunity afforded him of answering them.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham): The hon. Member is, I think, under a misapprehension with regard to the reasons which led to the discharge of Mr. Millard from the Admiralty service. He was discharged, not as a result of complaints made against him, but upon a careful consideration of his general record, which had been increasingly unsatisfactory for some time, and which had previously necessitated his removal from Chatham to a less responsible post. The inquiry recently held at Portland was primarily concerned with investigating certain serious charges made by Mr. Millard against an officer who had formerly served under him.

* See (4) *Debates*, cxxxv., 497.

Those charges were found to be groundless, and whilst certain countercharges were brought against Mr. Millard by the officer referred to, they were not considered of sufficient importance to call for a more thorough investigation, nor was the decision of the Admiralty in any way influenced by them. The decision to dispense with Mr. Millard's further services was based solely upon his inability to discharge efficiently the duties of his office, and the Admiralty, after the fullest consideration, and acting under the authority vested in them, came to the conclusion that they could no longer retain him in the Government service.

Promotion in the Army.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state who is the officer or what is the authority whose duty it is to make inquiries and obtain the information which enables officers to be selected for promotion, or any staff appointment, or special service; and whether the selection is based on personal knowledge or entirely on formal reports.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The confidential reports of officers of the Army are in the custody of the Military Secretary, who is also secretary of the Selection Board. Selections for command or promotion are made by this Board, and when further information is required about any officer it is obtained from General Officers Commanding by the secretary. These selections are made partly as a result of personal knowledge and partly from a study of the formal reports on an officer throughout his career. Staff appointments are made, on the same principle as promotions, by the member of the Army Council who presides over the branch concerned.

Army Officers' Appeals.

GENERAL LAURIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether there is any authority to which officers of the Army may appeal when they consider themselves aggrieved by the action of their superior officers; and what steps

such aggrieved officers are permitted to take to obtain an inquiry into their complaint.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: An officer who thinks himself wronged by his Commanding Officer may appeal to the General Officer Commanding, and if he thinks himself wronged by the General Officer Commanding in respect of his complaint not being redressed, may demand that it be forwarded to the Army Council. The Army Council examine into such complaint and give their decision thereon. If the officer considers that his complaint is still unredressed he may appeal to the Sovereign, which appeal will be submitted by the Secretary of State for War.

GENERAL LAURIE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that until very lately the Military Secretary received upwards of 100 officers every week to enable them to lay before him any points on which they were aggrieved, and that the Commander-in-Chief also held periodical levees for the same purpose? Is there now any opportunity afforded for personal statements?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I can assure my hon. and gallant friend that complaints are constantly received and dealt with, and no privilege has been taken away from the officers.

Linked Battalions.

GENERAL LAURIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the system of linked battalions is still in force among the infantry of the Line; whether drafts for battalions serving abroad are still furnished from the battalions serving at home; whether, in all cases, one of the linked battalions is serving in the United Kingdom; or, if not, in how many cases are both battalions serving abroad; and how, in such cases, drafts are trained and furnished to both battalions.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The system of linked battalions is still in force and drafts are still furnished from battalions serving at home. There are four regiments which have no battalion at home. In these cases the drafts are

furnished by the details with the provisional battalion formed for the purpose, or, if these are insufficient to feed both battalions, the battalion which is on short tour abroad is treated as if it were at home and is liable to be called upon for drafts for the other battalion, its link, which is abroad on its proper foreign tour.

GENERAL LAURIE: May I ask whether the battalion of the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, now under orders for the Mediterranean, would relieve one of the so-called home-service battalions, or whether this would not make a fifth regiment abroad without a linked battalion at home; and also whether, in the case of four battalion regiments like the 60th Rifle Brigade, the right hon. Gentleman considers that when each of these has three battalions abroad and one at home it can be held that each battalion abroad has a linked battalion at home.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir, it could not be. I must ask for notice as to the first supplementary Question.

GENERAL LAURIE: I apologise to the House for pressing this matter, but it is of some importance to the profession. May I ask whether instead of counting four home-service battalions abroad it would not be well to take the Army List statement, which shows seven.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER made no reply.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): That's a poser.

South African War Stores Inquiry.

SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield), in accordance with private notice, asked when the Report of Sir William Butler's Committee would be presented to the House; when the evidence would be available; and how and by whom the recommendations of the Committee had been communicated to the Press before being presented to the House.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the Report had been received and communicated both to the Council of Defence and

the Public Accounts Committee, as representing the House of Commons. The evidence would be presented as soon as it was printed. He was not aware how the recommendations of the Committee had reached the Press, and certainly it was not through the War Office.

Garrison Artillery Volunteers.

SIR ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any of the guns belonging to ships lately discarded by the Admiralty could be made available for Garrison Artillery Volunteers; and, if so, whether he will supply them to those Volunteer companies that still have nothing but muzzle-loading 64-pounder guns to drill with.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: This question is at present under consideration. It is probable that a certain number of guns will become available at an early date.

The Colonial Conference.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has already communicated with any of the Colonial Premiers with a view to arranging for a conference of Colonial Premiers in 1906.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. LYTTETLTON, Warwick and Leamington): No, Sir.

Turkish Disturbances.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government, in view of the disturbances reported to His Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, will enter into friendly conference with the Governments of France and Italy with a view to the early augmentation of the existing Consular staff in the European and Asiatic provinces of Turkey, by the appointment of travelling Consular attachés and assistants to the Consulates in those vilayets.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (EARL PERCY, Kensington, S.): His Majesty's Government do not consider that there

are sufficient grounds for suggesting to the French and Italian Governments a simultaneous increase of the Consular staff of the three countries in the Ottoman Empire. The Consulate at Adrianople has been recently reopened, and no further increase appears necessary at present.

Mecca Pilgrims.

MR. STEVENSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can announce the steps which have been taken, or will be taken, for the safe escort of British Mahommedan natives of India travelling between Jeddah and Mecca, and Medina, during the present pilgrim season.

EARL PERCY: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this. The pilgrim season for this year is now over, and no complaints have been received from the Government of India in regard to the amount of protection afforded by the Turkish authorities to pilgrims from British India.

Agrarian Crime in England.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the malicious burning of the house and property of Mr. Ripper, a farmer at Thelmetham: and whether, seeing that nineteen horses, cows, and pigs were burned to death, he will say what action has been taken by the police, and will Mr. Ripper get compensation for this malicious outrage.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): No, Sir. My attention has not been called to this case. It would be a matter for the local police, and not one in which I have authority to take any action. The farmer would not be entitled to compensation from public funds unless the case came within the provisions of the Riot (Damages) Act, 1886.

MR. FLAVIN: Is there any official connected directly or indirectly with the Government who has any authority for dealing with these outrages?

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Has not the Executive Government of this country the same duty in regard to crime and outrage as the Executive Government possesses in Ireland? Who is responsible?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The responsible authority in this case is the standing joint committee of the county in which the outrage is committed.

MR. DILLON: After Questions are over I shall raise this as a matter of order. I shall inquire if we are not entitled to ask from some representative of the Executive Government in England what special measures it is intended to take to put a stop to the commission of outrage in England. Are not the same steps taken as in Ireland?

MR. FLAVIN: Was not this man's house fired in two or three different places? Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire as to that?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I shall be happy to get any information in my power.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Are such cases reported to the Home Office?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: No; but when such cases are brought to my notice it is my practice to inquire into the facts.

MR. DILLON: Here we have a Minister willing to make inquiry. Surely, then, we have a right to ask for information such as is constantly given in the case of Ireland?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I do not think hon. Members can ever say I have refused information.

MR. DILLON: Oh, no! We make no complaint against the right hon. Gentleman. But several of our Questions have been refused at the Table, and I want to raise that as a point of order. Perhaps as the right hon. Gentleman has promised to make inquiry into any case as to which we require information, the Clerk at the Table will accept our Questions,

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: A solution might be arrived at if hon. Members would frame their Questions somewhat differently and invite the Home Secretary to make inquiry.

Vaccination Exemption Certificates.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that Edward Robinson, a blacksmith, of Warmington (Warwickshire), applied four times (on January 25th, February 8th, February 22nd, and March 29th, 1905) for a vaccination exemption certificate to the Kineton bench of magistrates for his child born on December 4th, 1904, and on each occasion was refused; and whether, in view of the frequency of such cases before certain magistrates, he will bring in a Bill substituting a statutory declaration by the applicant to be filed by him at the time of the registration of the birth for a certificate of exemption.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. I have no information as to the case to which the hon. Member refers. I may point out that proposals of the kind which he suggests were fully discussed when the Bill for the Vaccination Act, 1898, was before the House and that they were rejected. I am not prepared to introduce legislation dealing with the matter.

MR. CORRIE GRANT: And what remedy has a man who conscientiously objects as in this case?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I must ask for notice of any further Question.

Unemployed Women.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that in some districts women are occupied in trades and their names figure in the registers of existing labour bureaux, which may be taken over by central and other bodies mentioned in his Unemployed Workmen's Bill, the terms workmen and

unemployed persons will be held to include women workers.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Having regard to the provision in Section 1 of the Interpretation Act, 1889, to the effect that, unless the contrary intention appears, words importing the masculine gender shall include females, the terms "workman" and "unemployed person" as used in the Bill would include women.

The Stanley Revision.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can now say when the scheme of the Department drafted to meet the conditions in the Post Office in 1903, as shown in the evidence of the men before the Bradford Committee, will be issued.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): The scheme to which I presume the hon. Member refers was laid on the Table of the House at the end of March last and came into operation on April 1st.

The Port of London.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the attention of the President of the Board of Trade had been called to the great improvement works, estimated at £10,000,000, to be guaranteed by the State, which are about to be taken in hand for the improvement and extension of the port of Antwerp; and what steps he proposes to take in order to place the port and docks of London in the hands of a public body, with a view to similar improvements being made on the Thames.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): As stated by me in reply to previous Questions of a similar nature, the Government is not prepared to make any proposals with respect to the port of London this session.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The Government, having raised the question and paralysed the action of the dock

companies, do not intend, then, to take any action to improve the port of London?

MR. BONAR LAW: I have nothing to add to my Answer.

Carnarvonshire Provided Schools.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the plans of repairs to and improvements upon provided schools within its area, involving an outlay of more than £1,500, submitted by the Carnarvonshire Educational Committee, have been approved by the Board of Education; and, if so, whether they are now in course of being carried out.

***THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University):** Since September 30th, 1903, the Board have informed the Local Government Board that, so far as educational requirements are concerned, they have approved plans for improvements of six council schools, the enlargement of three council schools, and the building of one new one. There are probably, besides, a few cases of small repairs and improvements. As the Board have not received any intimation of the sanctioning of a loan in any case except that of the new school, I am afraid I cannot say precisely the cost involved in the carrying out of these repairs and improvements, but I think it is quite likely that they amount to £1,500, more or less.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The sum should be £15,000, not £1,500. It is a misprint in the Question. Will the hon. Gentleman inquire if the repairs, etc., will cost the large amount?

***SIR WILLIAM ANSON:** I will certainly inquire if the hon. Member desires it, but I am tolerably certain that further inquiry will only confirm the figures which I have given.

Denbighshire Education Dispute.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been drawn to the statement made on the 18th inst. by the chairman

of the building committee of the Denbighshire education authority, to the effect that the council had appointed a surveyor before the appointed day to visit, inspect, and report upon the condition of every school in the county, provided and unprovided, and that the building committee had proceeded to execute the necessary repairs of the provided schools in accordance with the recommendations of the surveyor's report; and whether he is now in a position to verify the accuracy of this statement.

***SIR WILLIAM ANSON:** I find on inquiry that a provisional survey of council schools in Denbighshire was made before the appointed day. Communications received from the local authority in March, April, and May, in response to requests made by the Board of Education for the remedy of defects in council schools, were to the effect that these matters were postponed until they could be reported upon by a surveyor and architect who was not appointed until the end of March and who entered on his duties on the 1st of this month. I cannot say what repairs were executed on the report of the provisional survey, but I infer from the communications which passed between the Board and the council that they were not of an important character. I will send the hon. Member a copy of my reply to the Denbighshire County Council.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The hon. Baronet has not answered the Question whether the same surveyor did not survey the council and voluntary schools under the same appointment; I think we are entitled to an Answer to that.

***SIR WILLIAM ANSON:** I am prepared to give a fuller Answer. The same surveyor did survey both the voluntary and the council schools. As regards the voluntary schools, they were required at the beginning of March to effect certain repairs and improvements by the beginning of April, whereas similar repairs and improvements in the council schools asked for by the Board of Education were deferred until the appointment of a new surveyor.

Inspection of Denbighshire Schools.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the resolution passed by the Denbighshire Education Act Inquiry Committee, which met at Chester on April 17th, 1904, appointing Mr. J. Price Evans to inspect all public elementary schools in the county, and to prepare a detailed report upon the school buildings within three calendar months of that date; whether he is aware that this resolution was confirmed by the Denbighshire County Council, acting as the local education authority, at its first meeting held on the appointed day, June 1st, 1904, and whether he has received a communication from the clerks of the Denbighshire Education Committee upon the subject.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: I am not aware that the Board were ever informed of the resolution referred to.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS: Was not a communication sent to the hon. Baronet?

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON: Yes, and I have addressed to them a letter, the reply to which, when I get it, I will communicate to the hon. Member.

International Fishing, Territorial Limits.

MR. MACONCHIE (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether, in view of the resolution passed at a meeting of the general committee of the National Sea Fisheries Protection Association, he will say whether the representatives of the Scotch Fisheries Board on the International Scientific Investigation Council are attempting to obtain the extension of the international territorial limit of three miles to that of nine miles.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): The British members of the International Council represent the Government, and not the Fishery Board for Scotland. I am not aware of any foundation for the allegation that they are attempting to obtain an extension of the territorial waters to a nine-mile limit. So far as I am aware, they have never made and are not now making any attempt to do so.

Threatening Letters in Ireland.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the Constabulary Return of offences committed in Ireland from December 1st, 1904, to April 19th, 1905, what steps are taken by the constabulary authority to verify the genuineness of the eighty-five offences classed as intimidation under the head of threatening letters or notices.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): These cases are first inquired into by the local police under the supervision of the county inspector. The cases are then submitted to the Inspector-General. If any doubt exists, they are re-investigated, and no cases are included in the Return unless he is satisfied that they are *bona fide*.

MR. FLYNN: What steps are taken by the constabulary authorities to test whether in these cases of alleged intimidation the people complaining are not themselves responsible for sending out the notices.

MR. WALTER LONG: Every possible step is taken to get at the facts.

Irish Land Act—Appointment of Public Trustee.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what were the special qualifications possessed by Mr. Arthur M'Clintock that induced the Government to appoint him to the office of public trustee under the Land Act of 1903; what were his place of education, previous occupations, and experience of finance; what are the names, place of education, salaries, and previous experience of the persons since appointed in the department; and how many of them were appointed by open competitive examination.

MR. WALTER LONG: In reply to the first part of the Question, I beg to refer to the Answer given by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover to a similar Question on February 8th, 1904.†

† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 592.

I have no further information on the subject. The Estimates for the current year make provision for an allowance of £350 to the public trustee to enable him to obtain clerical assistance. The selection of clerks is left to him, and the two officials at present employed were not appointed by competitive examination. One of them served some years in the Land Commission, and the other had experience as an accountant.

MR. MACVEAGH: Are we to understand he has a right to appoint his staff without any examination?

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, the clerical staff is entirely appointed by him.

MR. MACVEAGH: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the Questions what were his place of education, previous occupations, and experience of finance; and what are the names, place of education, salaries, and previous experience of the persons since appointed in the department.

MR. WALTER LONG: So far as I know, there is no record kept?

MR. MACVEAGH: Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that all the particulars I have asked for are kept in the establishment register of every department?

MR. WALTER LONG: I believe not.

MR. MACVEAGH: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman it is so. I will put another Question down.

Carntall Presbyterian Church.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the painting of crosses on the walls of the Presbyterian Church at Carntall, county Tyrone, by Orangemen, with the object of intimidating the clergyman of that church for having employed a Catholic mistress in the local national school, was reported by the police as an outrage; if so, whether it is included in the Return of outrages and other offences of an indictable character issued to Members

on May 24th; or any preceding Return, and under what heading is it described; if not, can he explain its omission.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Answer to the first inquiry is in the negative. The painting of the crosses on the church was doubtless intended to indicate disapproval of the appointment of the teacher, but this Act, however objectionable it may have been, does not constitute an indictable offence. The Return referred to includes indictable offences only.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Had it occurred in the South of Ireland a very different view would have been taken.

MR. MACVEAGH: Why was not the case included in the Return under the heading of injury to places of worship, which I notice is blank.

MR. WALTER LONG: Probably it was not regarded as an injury.

Clanmorris Estate, County Mayo.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state on what date two men named Good and Black, who reside at Westport, applied for parcels of the grazing lands on the Clanmorris Estate, county Mayo, the quantity of land applied for by each of them, and the grounds given to justify the application.

MR. WALTER LONG: The application was made by the vendor's agent on 11th October, 1904, when terms of sale to the Commissioners were being arranged. No formal application from these persons themselves has been received. The application on their behalf is made on the ground that they are tenants on the estate.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has inquired into the charge made against two clerks named Good and Black, who are engaged in the office of Mr. Rutledge, sub-sheriff for the county Mayo, of having induced two bailiffs on the Clanmorris Estate to consent to give

them small patches of their holdings, with a view to enable them to obtain an advance of money from the Estates Commissioners; and if not, whether he will grant a full inquiry into the whole case, and, if the charge be sustained, order a prosecution of these parties for attempting to obtain money and land under false pretences.

MR. WALTER LONG: No charge of the kind indicated has been made, and no necessity exists for an inquiry such as is referred to. But, as I informed the hon. Member on the 18th instant,† the Commissioners will fully investigate the claims of these persons before deciding whether they shall receive advances for the purchase of "parcels" of the land in question.

Annfield Estate, County Mayo.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an advance of money has been sanctioned for the purchase of the Annfield Estate, in the parish of Kilcommon, in the Ballinrobe Union; whether he is aware that there are about 300 acres of grazing lands on this estate, and that there are three congested townlands on its borders, Davros, Mollyroe, and Rathgranagher; and whether, seeing that over 100 acres have been given to one man who has already several large farms, and 180 acres to another man who has land elsewhere, leaving only about 20 acres of land for the enlargement of holdings on that property, he will see that these lands will be taken from these persons and divided amongst those whose holdings are uneconomic in the district.

MR. WALTER LONG: This property, which has been purchased by the Congested Districts Board, contains 200 acres of tenanted land and 467 acres of untenanted land. It is not situated in or near a congested district. The Board's object in purchasing was, first, to enlarge those holdings which required enlargement, and, secondly, to exchange the remainder of the untenanted land for land in congested districts, so as to relieve congestion there. They have

arranged to give 183 and 112 acres respectively to farmers who are giving in exchange 382 acres near the Roche Estate, on which the holdings require enlargement. One hundred and seventy acres are reserved for the Annfield tenants.

North Kerry Evicted Tenants.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of tenants who have bought or agreed to buy their holdings in North Kerry; the number of applications made by evicted tenants for reinstatement in their holdings; how many evicted tenants have been reinstated since November 1st, 1903, by the landlords to their evicted farms; and how many evicted tenants have been reinstated by the Estates Commissioners to their holdings or equivalent ones since November 1st, 1903.

MR. WALTER LONG: One thousand six hundred and fifty-seven agreements for purchase have been lodged, and in fifty-seven of these cases advances have been made. Four hundred and twenty-four applications for reinstatement have been received, but, of these, ten are outside the operation of the Act. Nineteen of the applicants have been, or are in process of being reinstated by the landlords. None have yet been reinstated by the Commissioners.

MR. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman give the names of any evicted tenants who are going through the process of reinstatement?

MR. WALTER LONG: Of course not.

MR. FLAVIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say why the landlords refuse to reinstate evicted tenants?

MR. WALTER LONG: Obviously I cannot without inquiry.

The Irish Executive and the Estates Commissioners.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has read the correspondence which passed between the Irish Executive and

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlvi., 745.

the Estates Commissioners, and in which the Attorney-General stated that there were instructions and orders contained in the correspondence; and, if not, whether he will examine this correspondence with a view to its publication.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir; but I have nothing to add to the replies which I have already given. I have stated that no regulations of the character mentioned in Section 23, Subsection 8, of the Act were made, but that communications of a Departmental and confidential character passed between my right hon. friend the Member for Dover and the Commissioners. Neither this correspondence nor any instructions or orders contained therein will be published.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman stated to us that he had searched the records and that nothing in writing conveying instructions to the Commissioners was to be found, and he further stated that he was not in favour of concealing anything and that there was no secrecy about it. I therefore repeat my Question, whether he is prepared to publish these letters containing the instructions referred to in the Report of the Commissioners.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Was the instruction under which Section 5 was altered made verbally or in a written document?

MR. WALTER LONG: Of course I could not ask the last Question. In regard to the Question by the hon. Member for Mayo, what I said, I think, was that I could find no record; and, so far as I am informed, no regulations such as those contemplated in the Question were issued or even framed. There were confidential communications of the ordinary Departmental character. It is quite obvious that it would be a departure of the gravest possible kind to enter into the confidential communications between the Executive and branches of the Executive.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say

that the alteration of Section 5 was made by a confidential document and is a confidential matter?

MR. WALTER LONG: It is a little difficult to answer these Questions, because I think there is a misunderstanding. I do not quite know what the hon. Gentleman means by the alteration of Section 5. I have repeatedly said that there were communications of an ordinary confidential and Departmental character between the Government and a branch of the Government. There is all the difference in the world between that and the issue of regulations. When my right hon. friend the Member for Dover was responsible for this branch of the Government the communications that passed were of a purely Departmental and confidential character, and it would be a gross departure from previous practice to disclose confidential transactions which took place under my predecessor.

MR. DILLON said that he could not accept the right hon. Gentleman's Answer and he would repeat his Question on another occasion.

Cavan Land Sale.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why no pink schedule map or other record can be found either with the Clerk of the Crown in Cavan or in the Land Commission Office, Dublin, of the land case of Patrick Patterson Raffney, Virginia, county Cavan, tried by County Court Judge Waters, in Bailieboro, in May, 1888.

MR. WALTER LONG: The obligation to frame a schedule and prepare a map was imposed for the first time by Section 1 of the Act of 1896.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that two acres of land are now about to be taken from Patrick Patterson Raffney, Virginia, county Cavan, by his landlord, which compose the area on which his rent was fixed, as tested by competent surveyors both of landlord

and tenant, and which have always been in his possession, to be given as bog plots to other tenants to enhance the price of the pending land sale; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

MR. WALTER LONG: An application for the sale of the estate, which includes Patterson's holding, has been received by the Commissioners. They have no information whether the facts are as stated in the Question, but will cause their inspector to inquire into and report on the matter.

Bellaghy Schools.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay on the Table the minutes of the National Board of Education dealing with the proposed amalgamation of the Bellaghy boys' and girls' schools, and the correspondence on this subject with the managers of the schools.

MR. WALTER LONG: It is understood that this Question refers to the male and female national schools at Ballynease, near Bellaghy. On 21st June, 1904, the Commissioners made an order directing the amalgamation of these schools, but, the manager having objected, the Commissioners reconsidered the matter, and on 8th November, 1904, rescinded their former order. The Commissioners consider that, as the case has now been settled, no good object would be served by publishing the minutes and correspondence.

Boyce Estate, Bannow.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application for the restoration of Mrs. White, evicted tenant on the Boyce Estate, Bannow; and, if so, what progress has been made in giving back to the tenant her old home.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir; but no proceedings for the sale of the estate have yet been instituted before the Commissioners. The application will be

inquired into should the estate come before them.

MR. FFRENCH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there is a planter on this holding and that at the time of the eviction there was some £1,500 or £1,600 worth of property on it belonging to the tenant? Has anything been done to recover it for the tenant?

MR. WALTER LONG: I imagine that is one of the matters that will be inquired into.

Irish Police and the Public.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Sunday, 2nd April, whilst Thomas Sheridan, together with two of his friends named Murray and Noone, was standing outside his own door, Constable Daly asked why they were shouting, which they denied; that Sergeant Dumphy, although Noone had gone into the house, ordered Constable Daly to draw his baton and attack Sheridan and Murray; and that the constable struck Murray twice, and dragged Sheridan out to the road and then released him; whether he is aware that they subsequently followed him into his own house, where Noone was, and arrested Noone in the house, handcuffed him, and took him to the police station; where he was kept until a late hour and then taken before Mr. Hazel, J.P., Athenry, at midnight, a distance of eight miles, and released, when summons was served upon him; and whether, seeing that Mr. Villiers, J.P., lives within a few hundred yards of the scene of arrest, and that when the charge was heard before a bench of six magistrates the chairman commented upon Sergeant Dumphy's action adversely, and that the magistrates unanimously refused information, he will say what steps, if any, he intends to take in this case.

MR. WALTER LONG: In this case a charge of assault has been preferred against the police, and it would obviously be undesirable to deal with the question while that case is *sub judice*.

Coagh Police.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will explain for what reason twenty-five extra police were drafted into the village of Coagh on the 19th instant; and will the extra charge be levied on the district.

MR. WALTER LONG: On this occasion a force of twenty extra police was brought into the village to preserve the peace, in view of an apprehended disturbance. These police belonged to the established force of the county, and no charge, therefore, is leviable on the district.

Police Searches for Firearms in Ireland.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to prosecute the search for firearms in other parts of Ireland as is at present proceeding in county Roscommon; if he will state the amount of ammunition discovered by the police to date; and will he state the number of searches made, with the result in each case.

MR. WALTER LONG: I must decline to make any statement as to the intention to search for unlicensed firearms. On the 15th inst. searches were made in four houses in the Castlereagh district under the authority of warrants issued pursuant to the Peace Preservation Act, 1881. In each of two of these houses a loaded gun was found and seized. No separate ammunition was found.

MR. DILLON: Was this on the De Freyne Estate?

MR. WALTER LONG: I cannot say.

MR. MACVEAGH: Will further searches be conducted?

[No Answer was returned.]

River Shannon Fisheries.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that certain

persons are claiming ownership of, and preserving to the exclusion of the public the fishing of, certain portions of the River Shannon, near Limerick, the former owners of which sent in claims to the Shannon Navigation Commissioners in 1838, and who received the amount awarded them in 1839; is he aware that the Commissioners in making those awards paid the full market value of each such fishery and fishing at that time; and will he say if such portions of the River Shannon are vested in the Irish Board of Works.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): If the hon. Member will communicate to me privately what are the particular portions of the Shannon referred to in the Question, and who are the persons who are alleged to claim ownership and the right of preserving to the exclusion of the public, and in what form the claim is expressed, I will make inquiries of the Commissioners.

MR. JOYCE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Shannon Navigation Commissioners recommended that certain fishery rights should be reserved for the use of the public, but reserved the right to give permission to fish such places, and that those recommendations were adopted by several sections of the second and third of Victoria, chapter sixty-one; and will he instruct the officers of the Board of Works in Limerick to have notices posted on the banks of such parts of the river, notifying to the public that such parts are the property of the Board, and are free to the public to fish and navigate until further notice.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: As regards the public right to navigate the River Shannon, Section 36 of the Act 2 and 3 Vic., cap. 61, declares that the "River Shannon is and for ever hereafter shall be to all intents and purposes a public navigable river," and goes on to provide that the public may have and enjoy free passage upon the river for their boats, barges, etc., on paying the rates and tolls and complying with the regulations of

the Commissioners. Section 44 of the same Act lays down that it shall be lawful for the River Commissioners from time to time to sell and dispose of or to demise for such term as to them shall seem expedient all fisheries and rights of fishing which are, under the provisions of the Acts or otherwise, vested in them. No section of the Act provides that any part of the River Shannon shall be reserved to the public to fish, and I do not consider it necessary to issue such a notice as is suggested by the hon. Member.

Portavogie (County Down) Post Office.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can arrange that postal money orders shall be procurable at the post office, Portavogie, county Down, seeing that the nearest postal money order office is four miles distant.

LORD STANLEY: I regret to find that the money order business which would probably be transacted is much too small to warrant the establishment of a money order office at Portavogie, even under guarantee.

Counter Risks of Irish Post Office Employees.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that officers in charge of counter duties are compelled to make good all their losses from their salaries; that at Clones, Enniskillen, and Portadown junior men and learners are frequently employed upon duties involving monetary responsibility; and that recently a learner at Clones lost 7s. in one day; and whether he will order that only skilled and experienced men and women are to be entrusted with business of this character.

LORD STANLEY: It is the general rule that officers employed on counter duties are required to make good deficiencies resulting from their errors. At offices such as those to which the hon. Member refers it is not infrequently necessary to employ junior officers on counter duties involving monetary responsibility, though such duties are entrusted as far as possible to experienced officers, but learners are not so employed unless acting as substitutes for sorting

clerks and telegraphists. The learner at Clones was so acting, but he did not lose 7s. in one day. He had on one day an apparent deficiency of 7s. 5½d., but 6s. was subsequently found in the drawer of another officer, where he had placed it in error.

Galway Postmen and the Bradford Report.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to resolutions relating to the findings of the Bradford Committee, adopted by the County Galway Branch of the Postmen's Federation; and whether it is his intention to redress the alleged grievances.

LORD STANLEY: The resolutions to which the hon. Member refers do not appear to have reached me. I shall be glad to consider any representations the postmen at Galway or elsewhere may desire to make to me; but I have no intention of altering my decision with reference to the recommendations of the Bradford Committee.

The Naval Battle.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask whether the Government have any intelligence to communicate to the House regarding the alleged naval action in the Straits of Korea.

EARL PERCY: We have not received any official confirmation of the report.

PRIME MINISTER'S ILLNESS.

Questions relating to the Valuation Bill, the Colonial Conference, the East Ham Borough Council, the Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill, and the fiscal policy of the Government appeared on the Order Paper addressed to the First Lord of the Treasury. When these Questions were reached,

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington) requested hon. Members to postpone them.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said he regretted to

gather from the right hon. Baronet that the First Lord of the Treasury was indisposed. In the absence of the latter, he asked the right hon. Baronet for information as to the course of business.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: I was at Downing-street in the morning when the Prime Minister arrived from the country. I regret to have to inform the House that the right hon. Gentleman is suffering from a severe chill, and that, by the advice of his medical advisers, he is confined to his bed. I understand that there is no chance of his being in the House for the next two or three days. In these circumstances I think hon. Members will agree with me that it would not be convenient on Tuesday to proceed with the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick, and we propose to take it on the earliest possible day next week. For Tuesday I propose to put down Supply—Report of Supply of May 8th—and either the Vote of the Local Government Board, on which, I understand, it is desired to raise the question of motor speeds, or the Vote of the Board of Trade, on which a number of hon. Members wish to raise the question of a Ministry of Commerce.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Before fixing a day for the Motion of my right hon. friend the Member for Berwick the Government will no doubt ascertain the general convenience in the matter, and especially the convenience of my right hon. friend.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: Certainly every endeavour will be made to meet the wishes of the Opposition. On Wednesday it is proposed to take the Agricultural Rating Bill, and on Thursday Supply, whichever of the two Votes mentioned for Tuesday is not taken.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Who will act as Leader of the House in the absence of the Prime Minister?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: If it is necessary for me to discharge the duties of that office I will do so to the best of my ability, as I have done before. I did not hear that the Prime Minister was ill until I came to the House. My right

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman,

hon. friend then told me that he had seen the Prime Minister and had been charged with a special message to the House. I thought it right that my right hon. friend should deliver that message.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Would it not be possible to take the Unemployed Bill this week. The session is wasting, and there seems little prospect of progress being made with the Bill.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): There is, too, the Scottish Churches Disputes Bill.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: I do not think Bills of such importance should be taken in the absence of the Prime Minister.

NEW BILLS.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1886," presented by Mr. Lamont; supported by Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Buchanan, and Mr. Cathcart Wason; to be read a second time upon Thursday, July 6th, and to be printed. [Bill 231.]

ACQUISITION OF LAND BILL.

"To provide for the Acquisition of Land by local authorities," presented by Mr. Atherley-Jones; supported by Mr. Moss, Mr. John Burns, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Slack, and Mr. Fenwick; to be read a second time upon Thursday, July 6th, and to be printed. [Bill 232.]

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.), in the Chair.]

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) moved as follows—"On and after the first day of August, 1905, one penny shall be substituted for one

shilling as the duty on coal under Section 3 of the Finance Act, 1901." The hon. Member said that, when the deputation from the coal trade waited upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer on April 12th, 1904, that Minister stated that he was keeping an open ear for any evidence and an open mind for the consideration of the Report of the Commission on Coal Supplies. This year the Chancellor was good enough to receive deputations both from the coalowners and coal exporters and the miners, and on those occasions he had said that he would make a statement in reply to the representations made to him on the Finance Bill. Those concerned in coal exports were, therefore, anxiously awaiting the statement. They expected to hear from the right hon. Gentleman to-day both in relation to the conclusions arrived at by the Commissioners on the coal supply question and also in reply to the statements made to him on the subject by the deputations he had received.

Since last year they had received the Report of the Royal Commission on Coal Supplies, and he ventured to say that they were indebted to that Commission for the most exhaustive investigations they made and for the lucid statistical and other information they had communicated. The main conclusions of the Commission were: First, that the coal export trade was of supreme importance to the country and essential to the prosperity of the coal-producing districts; secondly, that there was no necessity to restrict artificially this export; and, thirdly, that the coal export duty did restrict such export. The Royal Commission rightly said that the coal export trade was of supreme importance to the country, and essential to the prosperity of the coal-producing districts, for no less than 5,000,000 people in this country depended for their livelihood on the coal mining industry, and no less than 80 per cent. of the cost of raising coal was paid in wages. Secondly, the Commission reported that there was no need to restrict artificially the exportation of coal. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, when he proposed the imposition of the tax in 1901, justified his

proposal largely on the ground that we were so rapidly depleting our coal resources that it was, in his opinion, desirable to check the expansion of the export trade. The Report of the Commission was really of the most fascinating and interesting character. They reported that under 4,000 feet in depth there were no less than 100,914,000,000 tons of coal, a quantity sufficient at the present rate of production to last for the next 450 years; but, in addition to that, they had unopened coalfields containing nearly 40,000,000,000. This altogether, the Commission informed them, was enough, at the present rate of production, to last 690 years.

Then they were alarmed somewhat about the quantity of Welsh smokeless steam coal. The Royal Commission reported that we had got nearly 4,000,000,000 tons, which, at the present rate of production of 18,000,000 tons per year, would last 222 years. Therefore, he thought the somewhat alarmist view put before the House and the country to justify the imposition of the tax had been proved to be absolutely groundless. Not only, however, was this the case, but the Committee should remember that by the rapid substitution of electric power for steam power there was a probability that the output of coal in this country would diminish in the future rather than increase. The Commissioners, too, gave them another interesting fact. They expressed the opinion that, if the coal consumed in the United Kingdom were applied and used in a scientific way, a saving of from 40,000,000 to 60,000,000 tons annually could be effected. They were told that domestic consumers used 32,000,000 tons per year, and that, by the adoption of central heating, hot-water pipes, or stoves, they could reduce that consumption by one-half.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that, in his opinion, the tax did not artificially restrict the export of coal, but the Royal Commission took the opposite view, and, after the fullest investigation, they stated that the duty did restrict such export. The fact was that an extra 1s. duty per ton to be defrayed between the pit and the consumer must inevitably have a material effect, especially in markets where other

sources of supply were available, and the British exporter had either been compelled to make a sacrifice of price to maintain his trade or to lose his position in the foreign markets. They found that the output of coal in the United Kingdom had gone up 7,250,000 tons since 1900, but there had only been 2,100,000 tons increase in exports, the other 5,150,000 tons having been absorbed by the home consumption or by the increased consumption of coal in bunkering. Bunkering coal had increased in the last four years by no less than 5,400,000 tons, mainly owing to the fact that it was free from any export duty, whereas in the coal subject to the tax the increase had only been 2,000,000 tons, though previous to the imposition of the tax our exports increased at a substantially greater ratio. He wished to state the case with absolute fairness, and he freely admitted that in 1904 as compared with 1903 there was an increase in the exports of coal of 1,300,000 tons with an increase of 400,000 tons of bunker coal in addition; but we had been fortunate in having abnormal demands springing up for coal in various quarters of the world. Last year the situation was saved by the strike in America, and this year, where in the first four months compared with the first four months of last year there had been an increase of 400,000 tons, we had benefited by the great strike on the Continent, affecting mainly Germany and the Netherlands. In the first four months of this year we sent to Germany and the Netherlands an increase of 1,455,000 tons, so that, except for that, our exports would have shown a decrease of 1,026,000 tons.

In the grouping of the statistics prepared by the Government Departments they had put certain countries together, which made it difficult to arrive at the exact result of the tax so far as the counties in which he was interested—Northumberland, Durham, and Yorkshire—were concerned, and he had, therefore, abstracted the figures, and he would very briefly state what had been the effect of the coal tax on the export trade of the United Kingdom to Holland, Belgium, and France. The coal produced in Scotland, Northumberland,

Durham, and Yorkshire, was of an ordinary quality and had no monopoly of any market. So far as Holland, Belgium, and France were concerned, there had been a decrease of exports to those countries from the United Kingdom, since 1900, of 3,000,000 tons; whereas, on the other hand, there had been an increase of exports from Germany to those countries of nearly 3,000,000 tons. Let them take the example of imports into France: Our export trade in coal to France in 1900 was 8,500,000 tons and in 1904 it was only 7,000,000 tons, a decrease of 1,500,000 tons, whereas Germany sent 400,000 tons more in 1904 than in 1900. Again, Belgium's trade with France had only diminished 9 per cent., whereas our trade with France had diminished 17½ per cent. The larger output rendered possible by the export trade enabled the collieries to be worked regularly and to the fullest capacity, and, seeing that the cost of production was enormously increased if collieries worked only four days out of six, consumers might rest assured that it was to their interest that the collieries should work full time if they were to get their coal at reasonable prices. Coal, also, was so essential an element of outward cargoes that any diminution of our coal exports must cause a rise in the import freights of goods.

If last year's output of coal in the United Kingdom were the highest on record, they should not lose sight of the fact that the trade of other nations had developed much more rapidly. The output of the United States had doubled in the last ten years, and the output of Germany had doubled in seventeen years, but it had taken thirty-five years to double our output. The Royal Commission had reports made to them by various British Consuls in centres where a large quantity of coal exported from this country was consumed. They stated that it was self-evident that the export duty must affect our competitive power and have an influence on the exportation of coal, and they stated that this view was supported by several British Consuls. The Vice-Consul at Rouen stated that the tax injuriously affected the introduction of British coal into the French market; and again; the Director of

Customs at Paris told them that the English coal tax enabled German coal to be sold 1s. per ton cheaper than Cardiff coal. Let them, for instance, take the question of gas coal. We had had a monopoly of French orders for gas coal, but since the tax had been put on there had been, for the first time, an inroad made on our trade with the Paris Gas Company, and at the present time they had entered into a contract for 250,000 tons of German gas coal. The Consuls reported that during the last three years our exportation of coal to France had decreased, whereas the importation from Germany had increased sensibly. Then let them take the case of Belgium. There was a Report from His Majesty's Consul-General at Antwerp, stating that the quantity of coal and coke imported into Belgium from the United Kingdom had fallen off considerably in the last four years, and the competition of German coal was undoubtedly the cause of the decrease. It seemed evident that the competition would continue, greatly to the detriment of British coal. So long as the powerful Westphalian Syndicate, whose object appeared to be to drive British coal out of the Belgium market, continued to supply coal at a much less cost than the British coalowner could afford to do, imports from the United Kingdom would necessarily fall off. He showed that since 1900 British exports to Belgium had fallen off 542,000 tons, while German exports had increased 750,000 tons. He (Mr. Walton) could quote further examples from the reports of Consuls in various parts of the world, and especially in Europe, but they represented exactly the same state of things as those he had already read. It might be said that a shilling export tax on British coal was no detriment to us in competing against Australian coal, but that was not so. Let them take the case of Valparaiso. In 1903 we sent to Valparaiso 317,000 tons of coal, whereas Australia sent 485,000 tons. The shilling tax meant an absolute bounty in favour of the Australian coal producer as against the English producer, and that was quite counter to the fiscal doctrines and proposals as they understood them of His Majesty's Government's present advisers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might say that the tax had not operated in-

juriously to the British coal trade, but he submitted that he had shown conclusively that, so far as Scotland, Durham, Northumberland, and Yorkshire were concerned, we had received 1s. per ton less at the pit's mouth on coal we exported in competition with Germany and Belgium than we should get if this tax did not exist.

The tax violated the principle of equal incidence of taxation; it was imposed on one great industry, an industry which was taxed to the hilt in regard to every rate and tax, local and Imperial, levied in this country. In addition to all the other rates and taxes which the industry had to pay equally with every other industry, it had to bear the burden of this tax amounting to £2,000,000 a year. In 1901 the Member for West Bristol said that if there were one kind of taxation more odious than another it was unfair taxation, and he could conceive nothing more unfair than that increased expenditure should be controlled by the voice of the whole people if one class only should be left to bear the increased burden. This was true in the case of the coal tax. The coal industry only was left to bear the burden of increased expenditure to the extent of £2,000,000 a year, and he hoped that it did not require anything more to be said to demonstrate how absolutely unjustifiable and indefensible it was to continue the tax. The coal trade in 1900 was in a prosperous state; to-day three collieries out of four in the United Kingdom were being worked at a loss, and the value of the coal exported had gone down on an average 5s. a ton. He estimated that the 46,000,000 tons exported were worth £11,500,000 less than when the tax was imposed, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer would recognise that this placed an enormous disability on the trade to bear this imposition.

He would give one example from his own constituency. He received a letter only last month telling him that the result of the tax had been that his informants had been compelled to sell their coal on the Continent at a heavy loss, that in consequence of this, they had decided to close the pit the next week. This would throw from 600 to 700 men out of

employment and cause great distress in the neighbourhood. In 1901 Sir Michael Hicks Beach said that, if he believed the tax would be paid by the miners, he would not impose it. Representatives of miners would take part in the debate, and he was sure they would have given to them statements which would clearly prove that the miners had suffered substantially in the reduction of their wages in certain districts solely as the result of the tax. He believed the Chancellor of the Exchequer was disposed to consider the question fairly, and though, perhaps, he would not see his way to take the tax off to-day, he hoped that the facts and figures in the Report of the Royal Commission, and which he had been able to produce, would lead him to say the tax was an unfair and an unjustifiable tax, and ought to be discontinued at the earliest possible moment. He would commend to him certain words of his distinguished father the Member for West Birmingham, who, speaking at a meeting of miners in 1903, said—

“You miners are only waiting to be eaten up. If you look, you will see that the production of coal in Germany, France, and America has been increasing with gigantic speed, and it is as sure as anything that in a comparatively few years they will want no more of your coal and that they will be, probably, exporters of coal here. What is your stand-by?”

He wished the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be their standby by removing this flagrantly unjust impost by which the export trade was so seriously handicapped.

*MR. JOHNSON (Gateshead), in seconding the Motion, stated that he spoke for the great mining community of workers in the country, numbering over 5,000,000, upon whose means of livelihood there could be no doubt that the tax had made inroads. They, therefore, protested against the retention of a tax which was so detrimental to their interests. Since last year they had had the Report of the Royal Commission, and it had done two things. It had exploded the popular impression that, in consequence of the limitation of the possible quantity of coal in this country, we ought to keep the coal in the country as a national asset, because we had at least 450 or 500 years possible supply, and they

could therefore afford to be calm in their deliberations; and it had also exploded the fallacy that a tax would not restrain trade. The Report was very conclusive, and it indicated that the tax had very considerably interfered, and was likely very considerably in the future to interfere, with the exportation of coal. A gentleman from Durham last year told him that he had lost two contracts, one for 275,000 tons, and another for 40,000 tons, absolutely in consequence of the tax.

He would give some quotations from the Diplomatic and Consular Report issued August 11th, 1904. In Belgium the imports from the United Kingdom during 1902 were, in money value, £463,520, and the report indicated that, as compared with 1901, there was a diminution of £100,000; in Denmark it indicated that the British export duty on coal had not very materially increased the supply of German coal but, it said, if the tax were reduced by 6d. then it would absolutely prohibit the German coal from entering the market. The total import of coal into the port of Bordeaux in 1903 was 891,858 tons, which was a reduction of 93,840 tons as compared with 1902. This, he thought, was a pretty clear indication that the effect of the coal tax had been to restrain the trade. Another quotation would show how the tax had injured the trade. The imports of British coal into Bayonne had decreased—Welsh coal from 160,539 tons in 1901 to 155,123 tons in 1902 and to 119,589 tons in 1903, and north-country coal from 75,876 tons in 1901 to 45,345 tons in 1902 and to 50,298 tons in 1903, whilst the imports of German coal had increased from 3,719 tons in 1901 to 35,760 tons in 1902 and to 60,705 tons in 1903. This showed that the tax had so handicapped the coal exporters of this country that Germany had been able to compete with British coal so successfully that whereas in 1900 they sent no coal at all to Bayonne, in 1903 they sent 60,705 tons. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might reply there had been an increase of our exports, but this was entirely due to the strike in the Westphalian and Belgian coalfields, and, as had been pointed out by German delegates at a conference, in supplying this coal “The

Mr. Joseph Walton.

British working men, in their judgment, had been cutting the throats of the Continental working men." But this matter could not be settled absolutely on the question of exports, however considerable it might be. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might reply that there had been an increase of 1,455,507 tons, but that enormous increase had been due to the Westphalian and Belgian strike, in consequence of which we had supplied the market on the Continent that year.

Coming to the question of the value of exports, he wished to say that it was the value of the exports which determined the question of the profits and ultimately of the wages. He was not going to postulate that the reduction in prices and following on that the reduction in wages was absolutely due to the shilling tax, but it had had a considerable influence upon it. While not postulating that the whole fact of the reduction was due to that, he wished to point out that if the condition of the coal trade in 1901 was such as to warrant the then Chancellor of the Exchequer imposing this tax that condition of things had now entirely passed away, as was shown by the present prices and wages, and therefore the tax ought to be now abolished. In the county of Durham in 1900 the price was 10s. 3·72d., in 1901 8s. 6·73d., in 1902 7s. 3·79d., in 1903 7s. 0·82d. and last year, in 1904, 6s. 5·97d. That indicated that between the putting on of the tax and the present condition of things there had been a reduction of price of 1s. a ton, which was sufficient evidence, if evidence were wanted, that the coal tax ought to be repealed. With regard to the question of wages. On the 1st January, 1901, in the same county, the wages were 65 per cent. above the standard rates, in 1902 40 per cent. above, in 1903 33½ per cent. above, in 1904 32 per cent., and this year 27½ per cent. above. In other words, in the county of Durham they had had reduction of wages equal to 38 per cent. In the case of Scotland they stood at 100 per cent. above the standard rates early in 1900, and to-day they stood at 62½ per cent. below that point. In South Wales they were 73½ per cent. above standard rates in 1900, and since then they had been reduced 40 per cent.

He did not wish to pursue this matter further. He had indicated by the Report of the Commission and in the evidence he had given that this tax had been a considerable restriction on the trade, and from the wages and prices he had been able to adduce he had shown that the shilling tax had considerably handicapped us during that time. Whatever the reason might have been for the imposition of this tax, that condition of things had now passed away, and the tax ought to be removed. When the right hon. Gentleman was looking for revenue he ought to find some other sources than the working man's wages out of which to take it. There were other interests which at the present time did not contribute one penny to the revenue of this country which might be tapped. The owners of royalties were getting now £6,000,000 out of the royalties of the mines in this country and did not contribute a penny towards the national expenditure. On the other hand, the colliery owner had to sink his capital in the pits, while the miners themselves had to invest their lives, as it were, day by day when they descended the pit, yet these were the men who were called upon to pay the revenue. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman, if he could not abolish the tax this year, would next year tap those sources which had not yet been tapped, that the burden might be taken off the shoulders of the working man.

New clause (Reduction of Coal Duty) —(*Mr. Joseph Walton*), brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

*MR. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth) said that, as he intended to adopt a different attitude on this occasion to that which he had adopted in previous years, he would like to explain his reasons for so doing. He had in previous years supported the several Chancellors of the Exchequer in voting for the imposition of this tax. The reason was simple. In time of war and stress he thought it did not do too closely examine the sources from which the Chancellors of the Exchequer collected

funds either for the expenditure of this country or for warlike enterprises, but when the war was over he thought it was time now that we were at peace to turn our attention to retrenchment and reform and take advantage of the opportunities to remedy injustices and to equalise the burdens of taxation, which might be much more evenly distributed than they were now.

He considered this tax unfair and unreasonable. In the first place, the class of coal affected most severely was the cheaper quality of coal mined in Scotland and in the North of England, which entered into competition with German and Belgian coal. He did not regard the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a true disciple of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, who told the House that taxes were not paid by consumers but by those who supplied the commodities affected. This tax was therefore borne by the British coalowners and the workmen who mined the coal. It affected us also in other directions. With the shilling tax the coalowner could not compete with the cheap German and Belgian coal. The shilling tax represented something like 16 per cent. and he, in order to compete, naturally attempted to shift the burden on to other shoulders. He therefore pressed the shipowners for lower rates, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to know whether the shipping industry of this country was flourishing or not. The steamship lines which paid income-tax other than those which received subsidies were almost *nil*. They were not only not paying interest on the capital involved, but they were not providing for depreciation. Moreover, on every ton of bunkers purchased abroad by British ships the shilling tax had to be paid, and on every ton of coal exported to railways abroad, owned almost exclusively by British subjects, the tax was imposed.

There were many ways in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer could obtain an equal amount of money, though possibly they would not be so popular, and they might mean votes. For instance, a tax on bicycles would bring in a large amount, but few Chancellors of the Exchequer would venture to impose one. The present coal duty

Mr. Houston.

was most unfair, and, with a view to conserving our great national asset (Smokeless Steam Coal), he suggested that a tax of 5s. or 10s. should be imposed on every ton of South Wales anthracite smokeless steam coal sold to a foreign Government. If it was thought that that would fall unfairly on the coalowners, the Government themselves might purchase some of the collieries and keep the coal exclusively for our own Navy. In view of the fact that this coal would retain its quality almost indefinitely by being stored in submerged deposits, he submitted that its unrestricted supply to foreign Governments, who, while friendly to-day, might be our enemies to-morrow, was a grave mistake. If it was true that smokeless steam coal could not be obtained elsewhere, foreign Governments would pay almost any price to obtain it; therefore the Chancellor of Exchequer could supply any deficiency which might arise through the abolition of the present duty by the imposition of a considerably higher tax on coal sold to the foreigner. As he did not propose to support the Government on the present occasion, he had deemed it his duty to express his view to the Committee.

MR. PARROTT (Yorkshire, W.R., Normanton) said it was very refreshing to hear supporters of the Government denounce the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Several colliery proprietors on the other side of the House were greatly interested in the selling of coal, but instead of speaking against the coal tax they sat quietly by for fear of offending the leaders of their Party. The tax was not only testing the loyalty of the followers of the Government, but also trying the patience of their opponents. Personally he had been connected with the coal trade as a producer for over fifty years, and he had never known such a tax to be imposed before. Predecessors of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer had urged in reply to deputations that they had nothing to do with the late war, but that it was necessary for them to get the money, and as the coal trade was exceedingly prosperous they had placed this burden upon it. It was argued that the colliery proprietors would not have to pay the tax, but it had since been proved

that they and the miners had had to bear the burden. Possibly at the time the coal trade was able to afford the tax, but since then the proprietors had been doing badly, and although he was more concerned with the miners, he liked to see the proprietors doing well, because they could then afford to pay their workmen according to the work they performed. In the present case they were suffering, and he failed to see how any intelligent gentleman like the Chancellor of the Exchequer could sit idly by and imagine that colliery proprietors and miners were escaping the tax.

The mere fact that a particular trade was doing well did not make it fair that a heavy tax should be placed upon it. But the coal trade was now doing badly and the tax still continued. Unless something was done there would soon be a serious stir in the country. Miners could not go on for ever suffering reductions. Last year when the question was discussed, 600,000 miners were under notice of reduction, the coal tax being urged by the colliery proprietors as largely responsible. That reduction was quietly submitted to, and during the last two or three weeks further reductions had been made or notices thereof given. No business man would quietly allow his trade to be taxed in this way. In his opinion it was wrong to tax trades; the Chancellor of the Exchequer should seek his money from some other source. It was recently stated that 500,000 people had incomes of only £50,000 a year; he wondered at the time how they managed to pull through, but they were the people who ought to pay taxes, especially for purposes of war, not the working men who were blamed in this House and elsewhere for encouraging the war—

MR. PARROTT said he remembered reading speeches in which it was stated that, as the working classes had encouraged the war, they must not mind being called upon to pay.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the hon. Member used the word "blamed," and he misunderstood his point.

MR. PARROTT said he was not in favour of taxing any trade, and if the right hon. Gentleman took the tax off the coal trade he would be doing what a wise man ought to do. He could not understand any gentleman outside a lunatic asylum crippling so important a trade as the coal trade. It was said that Chancellors of the Exchequer nowadays were not satisfied with hundreds, thousands, or tens of thousands of pounds; they had to deal in millions. The coal trade could not afford to have millions taken from it; workmen and employers were suffering; and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see his way to sweep the tax off altogether.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington) said that although he did not agree with all the arguments adduced by the other side, he thought sufficient had been said to show that there were other sources of revenue which for the country at large it would have been better to have touched rather than the coal trade. Being to some extent interested in the trade he did not feel justified in taking a prominent part in opposition to this tax, and therefore he had not spoken in previous debates on the question. But he thought the position had changed considerably since last year. A variety of objections had been put forward against the tax, some opponents making it clear from their own point of view that the coalowners paid the tax, and others that the burden fell on the miner, while many held that the consumer alone had to pay. It was very difficult to say upon whom the incidence of this tax fell, but it was a peculiar fact that some of those who were most ardent in their opposition to fiscal reform, and who would say, if this coal was exported from a foreign country, that the tax fell on the consumer, now believed

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): I am sure the hon. Gentleman does not wish to misrepresent me or my colleagues. We have never suggested that any blame attached to working men for supporting their country during a great war.

that it fell on the producer. He remembered distinctly the right hon. Baronet the Member for Berwick saying that the incidence of the coal tax fell upon the miner. Of course it might be said that one was an export tax and the other an import tax; but that did not really affect the principle of the argument, as it made no difference to the argument whether the tax was paid on one side of the water or the other. The crucial test to apply to the tax was whether it was the best means for the country at large of obtaining revenue. He believed it to be economically unsound and involving a deliberate transfer of trade to German coalowners at the present time.

His reason for saying that the position had altered since last year was based upon the Report of the Royal Commission. On April 12th, 1904, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, replying to a deputation representative of the coal-exporting districts, who sought the abolition of the tax, said that he regarded the question as being in a manner *sub judice*, and that he could not deal with it until the Commission on Coal Supplies had presented its Report. As all knew, the Commission had now presented its unanimous Report, and the facts and conclusions to which the Commissioners drew attention were as follows:—(1) that the coal export trade was of supreme importance to the country and essential to the prosperity of the coal-producing districts; (2) that there was no necessity to restrict artificially this export trade; and (3) that the coal export duty affected our competitive power and restricted such export trade. Everyone would wish that a man should be taxed in relation to his power to pay, but that was impossible if worked out. An artisan, for example, who earned 30s. a week and drank two glasses of beer paid far more in proportion than the man who did not drink. Yet nobody in the House would think it wise to take the tax off alcohol altogether at the present time. It had been suggested that royalties should be taxed more heavily. He represented a firm which paid a very large amount in royalties every year; but he did not think that that would be the best means of obtaining revenue. If an extra penny

per ton were put on royalties it would simply mean that the royalty owners would increase the royalties by the additional penny. There were other ways by which revenue could be obtained. He knew the Chancellor of the Exchequer's powers were limited under our present fiscal system, but he wished to remind him of the altered condition of affairs, and to express the opinion that it would be wise in the near future to remove the tax.

*MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) pointed out that every speech in the course of the debate had been in opposition to the tax. There was no doubt, as the hon. Member for Darlington had truly said, that the position had materially changed since the tax was first imposed. There had been started a tariff reform crusade, the object of which was to increase our export of manufactured goods and to enlarge the opportunities of employment for the working classes. Those were laudable objects, but this tax, which operated in the opposite direction, was imposed and had been continued by the votes of Gentlemen who supported the tariff reform movement. It could not be denied that the operation of this tax tended to restrict our competitive power in markets abroad. The recent Royal Commission had declared that to be self-evident, and if it restricted our competitive power it also tended to restrict the opportunities for employment.

He could not help wondering at the situation in which the House frequently found themselves. When they were considering the question of the production of gold, it was necessary that it should be extracted with the greatest possible expedition, even though cheap indentured foreign labour had to be employed for the purpose; but when it was a question of extracting black diamonds in the shape of coal it was a matter of small consequence if the power of production was restricted—the commodity could remain in the earth as a sort of patrimony for generations to come. But the discoveries of science made it every day more likely that unless the potential wealth which we possessed in our enormous coalfields was realised quickly we

might not be able to gain a single advantage from its possession. Labour Members and trade union leaders had been again and again charged with inconsistency in supporting trade unions and opposing protection as though there was any analogy between the protection which trade unions offered to the labourer against the selfishness of capital and the protection which tariff reformers proposed to give to capital at the expense of the interests of labour. The inconsistency lay rather with the tariff reformers, who were responsible for the imposition and the continuance of this tax. Trade unionists, when charged with inconsistency, were entitled to say to the tariff reformers, "Pluck the beam out of your own eye before you attempt to remove the mote of inconsistency from the eye of Labour Members and trade union leaders."

MR. PIKE PEASE asked whether the hon. Member could name a single country where a protective system had been introduced and wages had not risen.

*MR. FENWICK said it was often contended that coal was not a manufactured article. He maintained, on the contrary, that the moment coal was brought to the surface it was as much the manufactured product of the miner as locomotives or steamships were the manufactured product of the engineer or the shipbuilder. It was true to say that coal was not a manufactured article only so long as it remained embodied in the bowels of the earth. Further than that, it was a manufactured article, the export value of which was greater than almost any other that could be named. From 60 to 80 per cent. of the export value of coal consisted in wages. Was there another article of manufacture where wages formed so large a proportion of the export value? In his judgment there was not. What they had to complain of was that this was not a tax upon a particular industry, but a tax on a particular portion of a particular industry. There might have been some defence to urge for the tax if it had been imposed on all coal raised, but instead of that it was only on the coal

raised for the export market that the tax was levied. He considered that was very unjust.

The Royal Commission stated in their Report that the tax was one which hit most severely those districts where the price of coal was slightly above the margin for which coal might be exported free. That was the peculiar position of Northumberland. According to the official figures for 1903, the latest available, the total revenue derived from the tax was £2,300,000, and of that no less than £583,000, or more than a quarter of the total, was collected from the two ports of Blyth and Tyne. Although it might be true, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol said when the tax was first imposed, that the export of coal of small value must form a very small proportion of our whole export, still it was equally true that in some districts the proportion sold at low prices was very great indeed. In the county of Northumberland there was a practice of ascertaining the average selling price of coal every three months. The figures for the last five ascertainsments were 6s. 4½d., 6s. 3¾d., 6s. 3½d., 6s. 2½d., and 6s. 2¼d., giving an average for a period of fifteen months of 6s. 3¾d. per ton, which was little more than 3½d. over the margin at which coal would be free of duty. Could they imagine an industry which was in that position being able to bear an export duty of 1s. per ton? It was utterly impossible, and if it had not been for the fact that we had had the benefit during the past three years of strikes, first in America, then in France, and at the beginning of this year in Germany, there would have been several collieries in Northumberland absolutely closed down. While he was at home during the Easter recess, only a few weeks ago, he was told that several collieries were working only one and two days per week; the price obtainable was not sufficient to pay for the working of the coal, much less to find wages for the miners, and yet this tax was maintained on the industry. It was monstrously unjust to levy this charge on an industry which was in that condition.

It had been said again and again—and this was the only justification

he had ever heard for the continuance of the tax—that the duty would fall on the foreign consumer. He was at a loss sometimes to follow hon. Members when they were dealing with fiscal questions. If it was an import duty on corn it was said that the foreign producer would bear the tax, and if it was an export duty on coal it was said that the foreign consumer would pay it. If that was so why did we not propose to tax both exports and imports and get our revenue for nothing? But they knew perfectly well that the foreigner did nothing of the kind. He objected to this tax also, because there was no corresponding duty upon any other trade or industry in this country. He opposed the war policy as strongly as he possibly could. He still thought that it was wrong. Nevertheless, those connected with the coal industry were not unwilling to bear their fair and proper share of the burden of taxation rendered necessary by a war which was hateful to them. But why should they be saddled with more than a fair proportion of the financial responsibility required to maintain the government of this country? There were other industries in the country in connection with which both employer and employed had reaped as great advantages as the miners and mineowners during the last three or four years of comparative prosperity. Did anyone ever suggest that they should be taxed in the special way the coal industry was taxed? There was not a single member of the Government who represented a constituency that was at all affected by the imposition of this duty. If there had been, that representative would have been called upon long ago to resign and confront his constituents on the subject. He had little hope that, at present, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be able to accept the new clause that had been proposed by his hon. friend the Member for the Barnsley Division. This coal duty was of such an exceptional character and so unjust in its operation that its absolute removal either by this or some other Government, could not be long delayed.

MR. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.) said that in speaking in support of the re-

Mr. Fenwick.

duction of the coal tax he would be only following the course he had taken in 1901, and he might say that four years experience had not diminished his belief that it was a bad tax. The objections expressed by hon. Members to the imposition of the tax in 1901 had been amply borne out by the Royal Commission. The Commission had dealt with the matter in a broad spirit, and he thought the tax should be dealt with in a similar manner. It was a tax upon a locality and upon a single trade. If the revenue was necessary the taxes imposed should be spread fairly over all exports and not confined to coal. He was not scientific enough to accept the doctrine that all taxes upon imports and exports were paid by the foreigner. In his opinion this tax was a departure from that freedom of trade which was the safeguard of our national industries.

Why was this particular trade selected for taxation? At the time it was imposed the tax was supported on grounds of remarkable inconsistency. It was said that it would be paid by the foreigner; that coal-owners were so rich and prosperous that they could afford to pay a tax of two or even five shillings; that the tax was excellent because it would diminish exports and keep coal in the country; that by sending coal abroad we were getting rid of our national capital for the benefit of the foreigner; and that we should keep our coal in the bowels of the earth for the benefit of posterity. All these arguments had been shattered by the Royal Commission. That Commission had upheld, what every man with the most elementary knowledge of the coal trade knew, that the tax was a burden and a hindrance to trade and must diminish our competitive power abroad. It also showed that the export of coal was a matter of national importance and absolutely essential to the prosperity of the coal-producing districts. The tax not only affected our coal trade but also our shipping trade. On general grounds he would oppose the tax as he represented a constituency strongly affected by it, and he thought it ought to be removed as an act of justice, because it was a partial tax, detrimental to localities carrying on a great national industry.

*MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid.) said he was delighted to hear the voice of the hon. Member for Darlington in this discussion. The side which the hon. Member had taken with a large amount of diffidence was a good augury that the cause of those who were opposing the coal tax was winning. They must peg away for a short time longer. They were sure to win when they were able to convert such an ardent tariff reformer to the belief that this tax was an economic fallacy. He would not follow the hon. Member into any fair-trade doctrine, but he had his own opinion about it. He thought he knew as much about the Continental miners as the hon. Member could know, and, without boasting too much about the situation of our own workmen, it was, he knew, infinitely better than that of the workmen on the Continent or any country where protection existed. Hon. Members must have gathered that there were two features about the miners' representatives, some of whom had been thirty, some twenty, and others a fewer number of years in this House. They had never interfered in discussion except they had something of value to say on the subject-matter before the House; and secondly, they had their full share of the British bulldog instinct. They were as persistent and tenacious as the animal which represented John Bull. In that case they had indicated from the beginning until now that they had no idea in their mind of slackening off their opposition to this coal tax so long as it remained in force. They would make the same objections to it, advance the same arguments against it, and the sooner that it was removed the better it would be for the welfare of the country and the interest of the men they represented.

The hon. Member for Barnsley, in his clear statement of the case, made an allusion, in passing, to a matter to which sufficient attention had not been paid, although it was most important, and had been urged from the first by the miners' representatives. The hon. Member mentioned that a colliery in the neighbourhood of Barnsley had been stopped owing to the imposition of this tax. That was a matter that wanted looking into more closely. Whatever alteration

might have come in the minds of the hon. Member for Darlington, the hon. Member for Liverpool, and others and whether they in their hearts were against this coal tax, or gave that opposition with their lips—they should be consistent and oppose it by their votes. He, himself, believed in the economic fallacy of this tax. He and his colleagues had always maintained that there were villages in every mining county in this country which depended entirely upon the mines for employment and for the support of their adjuncts—the village shop-keepers; and that to stop a mine employing 600 workmen meant the depopulation of a district; to deprive 600 men of their employment, and they and their families of bread, except they were kept by the voluntary subscriptions of their fellows, was to cut off the incomes of the men who had private property and had laid out their money in building shops. The result was to augment the volume of the unemployed, which was a soreness in the great social fabric; to increase the volume of labour seeking employment; and to render employment risky and precarious.

Hon. Members talked of a 1s. tax as a mere bagatelle in the contract market. He did not think he had ever made a contract in his life, except one, and that he had never regretted from that day to this. He was persuaded to go on a certain journey; he went as a whole man and came back a half one. He trusted the *bona fides* of employers in this matter; and they said that the difference of 2d. or 3d. in the price per ton made all the difference between profit and loss. He believed that coal-owners on both sides of the House would admit that they had been shut out of contracts by a difference of 2d. or 3d. per ton. Employment had, in that way, been diminished, profits had been lessened, and wages had been lowered. They had been told by the hon. Member for Darlington that the foreigner paid the tax. He had always looked upon the foreigner as being as keen a business man as any Englishman, and as having as full a desire to buy in the cheapest market. He would not give 1s. per ton more for English coal if he could get the article for 1s. per ton less in his own country.

Therefore the *ls.* must come out of the profits of the employers in this country and out of the wages of the workmen. No amount of reasoning on political economy constructed in the study of a political economist, and no amount of help given by permanent officials to assist the Chancellor of the Exchequer to frame his balance-sheet, would clear that principle out of the commercial life and industry of this country.

Now, he looked upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer as being a sort of Hyde and Jekyll. He looked upon the right hon. Gentleman as a man and as an official. He was confident that when the right hon. Gentleman got up to reply he would say that, as a man, he sympathised with them. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman would agree with that. Of course, he had heard the right hon. Gentleman speak so to deputations which waited upon him. On coming away from one of these interviews with the right hon. Gentleman, he told his fellows that after the genial expression of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his kindly tone, he was sure the right hon. Gentleman desired to sympathise with them; and that led him to imagine that if the right hon. Gentleman could by any possibility remove this tax he would do it. But then the Chancellor of the Exchequer stopped him. Dr. Jekyll had laid his hands on Mr. Hyde; and while the man sympathised with them, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was seeking for an income. All human nature, like water, sought the least resistance. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman that he was dealing with the least resistance. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman that he was dealing with a very patient body of men—a body of men which, in 1901, if they had taken the advice offered them, would have struck against the imposition of this tax. They did not take that advice; they were too patient; and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, seeking for income, traded upon that patience, while the Member for Worcestershire sympathised with them. So far as he was concerned this was no Party question. He did not speak thus on this matter because he was politically in opposition to the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. John Wilson.

He told any prospective Chancellor of the Exchequer, even if he came from his side of the House, that if this tax was not removed the same opposition would be given to him as to the present Chancellor of the Exchequer.

He and his colleagues had no regard, no solicitude, no incitement, no impulse beyond the welfare of their people. That was their motive power. A great deal was heard about Imperialism; about extending the Empire, and rounding it off scientifically. There was talk about Little Englanders and Larger Englanders. He was Little Englander enough to confess that anything which impinged on the earning power of the men he represented; anything that lessened their ability to get bread for their families; anything that would bring a blight upon the conditions of their domestic life, he would oppose. That was the heart of the Empire to him. And he should make it his first duty and sole care that nothing whatever should impinge upon the possibilities of their lives. To the deputation, to which reference had been made, the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave expression to some words that were very pregnant to him. The right hon. Gentleman said—

“We cannot decide this question by general statements, however attractive; we must look to the actual facts of the trade.”

But in conjunction with that expression he would quote what was said by the Royal Commission, the existence of which the right hon. Gentleman had always given them, with due courtesy, as a pretext for not going into the matter. That Royal Commission had proved, on evidence taken, that it was the competition of the world that our employers had to contend with. But what were the actual facts? The Royal Commission stated that the mining industry—one of the most dangerous, difficult, irksome, and unpleasant trades that could be carried on, had had their wages reduced 60 or 70 per cent. by this tax in some cases. The wages of miners in Scotland had been reduced by 67 per cent.; and the reduction had been accepted loyally, if not cheerfully. Hon. Members referred to an income-tax of one shilling; what was that to a man with an income of £5,000

a year? The reduction in the miners' wages was equivalent to an income-tax of 4s. in the £. Had not the time now arrived for the repeal of the tax? Not a single argument which had been advanced by the Government in favour of it remained. He sympathised with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was in a quagmire. The Royal Commission had reported against the tax; all the Consuls with one exception gave their verdict against it. It was said that not only were the owners making great profits, but that the miners were earning fabulous wages. In their very best days miners only earned 7s. a day; which, if it were five times as great, would not compensate them for the dangers and difficulties of their work. Wages had decreased fearfully; and in his opinion, if the tax were not removed, they would decrease still further. The tax could not be tested in a booming market. It could only be tested when the supply of coal exceeded the demand; and when producers were rushing into the market.

Why should miners be specially taxed? One reason, which had been stated in the House, was that they were supporters of the Radical Party. They and their representatives opposed the war. Was that a reason why they should be taxed? When the right hon. Gentleman introduced his Budget in a splendid speech he said—

"That it was one of the objects of any system of national taxation that every member of the community should contribute his fair share to the expenditure of a Government which in the last resort was controlled and directed by the popular will. But it was obvious that such a change as he had described, without any change in taxation, might upset the financial equilibrium and, by altering the proportionate burdens of different classes or individuals might render inequitable and unjust a system of taxation which in other times and with other tastes was both fair and reasonable."

The right hon. Gentleman further said that the indirect taxpayer paid 51·8 per cent. of the total taxation excluding the tax on coal. Why should the mining industry be jeopardised and foreign competition strengthened in this fictitious way. During the Franco-German war the coal trade of this

country was developed beyond the dreams of any man engaged in the industry. The result of the tax was to give an impetus to the coal trade of Germany, France, and Belgium. Where was the equity?

He wished, in conclusion, to refer to the generosity with which hon. Members had listened to the arguments which had been advanced against the tax; and also to the kind attention which had been given to them by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not be impervious to the arguments which had been advanced. They, the Labour Members, were connected with the working men in a manner the right hon. Gentleman could not know; they knew their hardships and dangers and how hard their lives were. He hoped that, if the Party of the right hon. Gentleman remained in office, the right hon. Gentleman would retain his present position, and that he would remove in his next Budget this most irksome and burdensome tax.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that no part of the Budget discussion, whether this year or last, had been conducted with more moderation, or with greater power and ability, or with closer reasoning and attention to the points actually involved, than that part (which related to the coal tax). He ought almost to regret to part from the coal tax, for it seemed to him to be the only tax the discussion of which was concentrated on the real issues. He shared the opinion that the Committee owed a great deal to the investigations of the Royal Commission, which had enabled them to approach this subject with a completeness of knowledge that otherwise they could never have attained. He frankly admitted that the discussion was taken in very different circumstances to those which prevailed when the tax was imposed or when the discussion took place last year, and he was free to make the admission that neither he nor did he think that any one would be prepared to initiate the tax in the present circumstances of the trade. But what had to be considered was not whether we

should impose this tax now for the first time, but whether it should be removed from the statute.

He did not propose to dwell at any length upon the tax as an important source of revenue which, in the circumstances of the present year, he could not afford to dispense with, and which at this stage of the Budget proposals he could not replace; but he did venture to observe that in considering the conditions of the coal trade at the present time and in the comparison which had constantly been made between now and the year 1900, the year before the tax was imposed, it should be remembered that the coal trade was, and always had been, subject to great fluctuations, and that the profits for everybody, for miners, for owners, for everybody interested, were abnormal in particular years; and if there was any prospect of such profits being permanently maintained, of course they would induce an influx of capital and create a demand for labour in that trade out of all proportion to what had been the case. But it was well known that following on these very good years—and this had always been so—there came bad years, and we had, therefore, the good with the bad years; and, just as he could not justify the tax by reference only to the best years, so the tax could not be condemned by arguments drawn solely from the bad years.

The Report of the Royal Commission had undoubtedly cleared the ground to a certain extent, and had disposed of some of the arguments which had at different times been used in debate, arguments which he had not employed and to which he had not attached much importance in his replies. For instance, though they did not express in any number of years the duration of our coal supplies, they had shown it was still so large as to remove all anxiety lest the supplies should be exhausted. The Commissioners did say what hon. Gentlemen had repeatedly mentioned, that the export coal trade was of great importance to the country generally, not merely to the coal industry itself but directly to the shipping trade and indirectly to many other industries through freights being affected by the absence of outward cargoes should coal exports be greatly

diminished or on their extinction, were it possible for a moment to contemplate such a thing; and, referring to the tax itself, they said the export duty must affect the competitive power of this country and must have an influence on the export of coal.

Figures had been cited in the course of the discussion in respect to particular districts, or ports, or sections of the trade, but the Committee would perhaps, allow him to, present a picture of what the trade as a whole had been in 1904 as compared with the preceding year. It was obviously possible out of the great mass of statistics to select a particular port or market and there show a great falling off in the export of coal, and it was equally true that the increase in a market might be caused by a trade dispute, a strike, or some abnormal circumstance, such as the war in the Far East, creating a demand for a particular coal. It was, therefore, important, for a true appreciation of the case, to examine the trade as a whole and not look merely to individual instances. Doing that, the result shown was that the number of men employed in the industry in 1904 was larger than the number in 1903, and the number of days work in each week only fractionally less—5·07 as compared with 5·09. The production of coal was greater in 1904 than in 1903 to the extent of over 2,000,000 tons, but the average price at the pit's mouth had fallen, as hon. Members knew. In all the export coal districts—South Wales, Monmouth, Northumberland, and Fife—there was an increase in the number of men employed and the coal produced; only in Fife had there been a reduction in the days worked. Such was the condition of the trade as a whole. Was there any other great trade in the country of which it could be said that employment was better than in the year preceding? [Several hon. MEMBERS mentioned the textile trades.] He had not the figures before him, but he doubted if such a result could be shown in the woollen trade. The cotton trade was very bad in the early part of 1904, though in the latter part of the year there was a great revival. But even if any hon. Members could find specific trades where that was the case,

speaking generally, the condition in those trades was not better in 1904 than in 1903.

The coal tax could not affect home consumption; it could only affect exported coal. In 1903 was recorded the largest export up to that time, and it was exceeded in 1904. Excluding coke, patent fuel, and bunker coal the exports in 1904 amounted to 46,255,000 tons as against 44,950,000 tons in 1903, an increase of 1,305,000 tons, or including coke, patent fuel, and bunker coal the exports of 1904 exceeded the exports of the previous year by over 2,000,000 tons. In relation to bunker coal, which some gentlemen wished to exclude from this comparison because bunker coal was not subject to the tax, it should be remembered that up to 1900 no one had any particular interest in separating this from other coal, and to make a fair comparison about 2,000,000 tons would have to be deducted on this account and attributed to bunker coal which in previous years was not entered specially as bunker coal but included in the total actually shipped. He was also asked what about the coal not exceeding 6s. per ton. There was an increase of that coal in 1904 in round figures of 1,300,000 tons. To what was that increase due? Obviously the general fall in the price of coal must bring a larger proportion of coal within the limit of the exemption. That was probably the main reason for the increase in the exportation of coal not exceeding 6s. a ton, but another reason was mentioned by the Commission in their Report. In recent years there had been vast improvements in the methods and appliances for preparing and utilising small coal. A great deal of small coal previously unmarketable, and often left in the pit to the great detriment of the workings, was now brought up and found a ready market either at home or abroad. As coal was less able to bear the tax, so it came within the limit of exemption and the amount of coal exempted increased. In 1902 the percentage of all the exports which received exemption was 6·72. In 1903 it was 9·89. In 1904, when the value of coal had further declined, the percentage which received exemption rose to 12·32. It would thus be seen that, in spite of the tax, the export of coal had

continued to rise, and was greater in the last twelve months than in any previous similar period.

*MR. FENWICK: Could the Chancellor of the Exchequer tell us the rate of development since the imposition of the tax as compared with the rate of development before the tax was imposed?

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: The increase in exports last year is much more than accounted for by the abnormal demand of the Russian and Japanese Navies.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN replied that one of the difficulties of discussing that subject was that they were told each year that the exports had been maintained by abnormal circumstances which could not recur, and hon. Members opposite were obliged to continue to advance the argument that although after each completed year the exports had increased, it was due to exceptional circumstances. At any rate, it was sufficient for his purpose to say, whether owing to abnormal circumstances or not, the export of coal, which dropped in 1901 from the very high figure of 1900, had now exceeded the latter figure and broken the record.

It was said that the price of coal had fallen. That was true of the price abroad, perhaps, more than at home. He had had some letters from gentlemen living in coal-producing districts complaining that the price quoted by deputations to them as being the price free on board for exports was a price at which they could not buy at the pit's mouth even if they sent their own carts for it.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: A different class of coal.

*MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that his informants told him it was the same coal. For the first three months of this year, when other abnormal circumstances had arisen, the increase was again retained and amounted to over 500,000 tons, of which coal not exceeding 6s. accounted for only about 160,000 tons, or less than a third. He invited the Committee to look to the proportion which coal exported from this

country bore to the total output of the country. That the coal trade had been suffering from low prices and was going through a bad time no one doubted; but was it the export trade, part of which was subject to this tax, which alone had experienced these bad times? He had shown that the exports had increased in spite of the tax. What had happened with regard to the amount of coal kept for home consumption? In 1900 the export was 25·93 per cent. of the total output. It had risen steadily in each year since then. In 1903 it was 27·7 per cent., and last year 28·32 per cent. of the total output. So this export trade, which it was suggested this tax would kill, bore a larger proportion to the total trade in coal now than it did in any of the previous years. Since 1900 the total output of coal had increased by 7,230,000 tons. The whole of that increase, and something more, had gone in exports, the home consumption remaining about stationary.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: But that included bunkers.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Of course it did. He was aware that the hon. Member for Barnsley thought that bunkers ought to be excluded altogether from exports, but he differed from him upon that point. He altogether disagreed as to omitting bunker coal from the calculation. Not only did last year show the largest export of coal they had ever had—an increase even upon the high figure of the twelve months before—but it had shown that the whole increase on the output of coal had been in coal shipped from these shores, and not in coal remaining at home, which was free from the tax. It would be difficult, nay impossible, with those figures before them to contend that this tax was having the ruinous effect upon the export trade that hon. Gentlemen had attempted to prove. It was alleged that the tax was particularly injurious to trade with France, Belgium, Germany, Holland, Spain, Scandinavia, and the short trades, and yet the export to those countries continued to increase. In 1902 it was 15,800,000 tons, and it had risen to 17,700,000 tons in 1904. If they took the countries separately they would find the exports

in each case rose to a higher figure in 1904 than in 1903, and the figures for Germany were not affected by the strike. In the case of France alone had there been a fall—from 6,976,000 tons in 1903 to 6,757,000 tons in 1904, not a very considerable fall, but one deserving attention and which they must expect to see continued in the current year. The same fall was noticeable in the first quarter of 1905. What were the reasons for their losing their hold upon the French market? Undoubtedly it was largely due to the increased development of the Westphalian coalfields. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last said but for the coal tax those fields would never have been developed.

MR. JOHN WILSON: I never said that. I said they were helped to be developed.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he thought the hon. Gentleman underrated the signs of development visible before the tax was imposed, the certainty that a great development would take place with the growing wealth and industrial progress of Germany, and that the competition of the Westphalian coalfields was further aided by the facilities for water carriage which they possessed, which enabled them to dispense with transhipment. That development was further stimulated by those favourable and preferential railway rates which formed no small weapon in the German commercial armoury. The Royal Commission reported that in this country coal exporters did not try to suit the requirements of foreign markets, and that the methods of Germany were more scientific and satisfactory. The great importance of cleaning, sizing, and sorting coal was insisted on. Our coal in a natural state was better and cleaner than the German, and the latter had only been brought into competition by careful cleaning and grading. Circumstances pointed to keener competition in the French market, where we should not in future, perhaps, hold the position that we had in the past. But the increase of our exports to a group of countries more than counterbalanced this decrease in the case of France.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

The representatives of the miners had pointed to the fall in wages which had taken place since this tax was imposed. With the fall in prices there had been undoubtedly a fall in wages, but to prove that wages fell because of the tax it was necessary to prove that the prices fell because of the tax. In 1900 wages, like prices, were abnormally high, and it was certain that worse times must come. But he had not been able to ascertain that the miners in the exporting districts had fared worse in 1904 than the miners in the non-exporting districts. [Cries of "Yes."] He was conscious that this tax stood in a peculiar position among our fiscal weapons. It was the only export tax that we had, and its effect upon the trade must be carefully watched. He could conceive positions in which it might exercise a very detrimental and even a fatal effect upon the trade. But it could not be said that it had excited that effect yet, or that the deterrent effect of which the Commission spoke had been sufficiently serious to impair the prosperity of the trade. The Commission reported that the volume of the coal export trade had steadily increased during the last thirty years, and that the rate of increase in exports had been greater than that of the total output. This showed that many other factors much more important than the coal tax had been at work. There was a case for watching the tax and a case for greater energy on the part of those engaged in the trade and for careful consideration by them of how their methods might be improved.

MR. LAMBTON: We were told we had a monopoly.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the monopoly still remained in a great many markets. [Cries of "Oh."] But the competition was becoming keener. He could not understand what effect hon. Gentlemen opposite supposed the tax to have or what they thought would happen if the tax were taken off.

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON: We should get a shilling more for every ton.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that if the coalowner and coalminer would have another shilling to divide for every ton, it was evident that they would not sell the coal cheaper, and therefore that they would be no better off in competing in the foreign markets.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhondda): They would keep their trade. The export of South Wales coal for the first three months of this year is 500,000 tons less than in the same period of last year.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the export trade from Bristol Channel ports in 1900 was 18,500,000 tons, in 1903 nearly 20,000,000 tons, and in 1904, 20,800,000 tons. The hon. Member was perfectly right as to the figures for the first quarter of the year. But it could not be shown that this tax had seriously restricted the output or export of coal or lessened the amount of employment available in the exporting districts. The contrary was the case. Though he admitted that the tax must be watched, there was nothing in the facts or figures to make it imperative in a year like the present, with taxes and expenditure at the present height, to part with a source of revenue which brought in £2,000,000, and for which he could see no satisfactory substitute.

MR. T. RICHARDS (Monmouthshire) said if he rightly understood the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that no Chancellor would attempt to impose the coal duty for the first time in existing circumstances, it was only fair to argue that the circumstances were such that its reimposition should not be insisted upon. He believed that if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol were Chancellor he would not reimpose the duty. He did not think there was a more unpopular man with those connected with the coal trade than the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol when he put this tax on their industry. Since this tax was imposed the wages of the South Wales miners had suffered a considerable reduction. The state of things in the coal trade was serious, and he impressed on the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the reductions in wages

must be considered when they were dealing with the Amendment now before the Committee. In dozens of collieries in South Wales and Monmouthshire, and especially in Glamorganshire, the working of inferior seams had been stopped directly as the result of this tax, and large numbers of men had been thrown out of work.

On a fair estimate the miners in South Wales and Monmouthshire had drawn from £15,000,000 to £16,000,000 less in wages since 1900 than they would have received if the rate prevailing in that year had been maintained. He admitted the year 1900 was somewhat abnormal, and, although he was not prepared to state how far the tax had affected wages, he affirmed that it had reduced our competitive power. Although the output had been fairly maintained and the number of workmen had been increased, that was accomplished only by sacrificing prices and the consequent loss to the owner and miner. As compared with 1900 the wages of the miners were 14 per cent. less in 1901; 30 per cent. less in 1902; 35 per cent. less in 1903; and 40 per cent. less in 1904. In view of this terrible reduction in their wages, the miners thought something ought to be done to prevent it, and they thought a little restriction on the output would accomplish that result. The Committee knew what had been the disastrous results to the miners of their attempts to enforce "stop days." As a consequence of the case in the Law Courts they had had to provide £57,000 damages out of the funds of their association, besides a large amount of costs. He joined in the protest against this tax, because he believed that it could neither be called preferential, protective, nor retaliatory, but was destructive of both profits and wages in the coal industry.

The new Labour leader, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, had made extravagant promises, but the coal miners would be satisfied with something less than two jobs for one man. They would be satisfied with the removal of this tax and the finding of work for the men who were at present out of employment in the colliery districts. They had hoped from the Chan-

cellor's opening remarks that if he were Chancellor next year he would not reimpose the tax, but although that hope had been dissipated by his concluding observations, the Members representing the miners would offer the most determined opposition to any Chancellor who proposed to retain this unjust impost.

*MR. MILVAIN (Hampstead) said he had never been in sympathy with the coal tax. He had never voted for it, and he did not intend to do so to-day. It was a new experiment in finance, and he did not think it had been justified by the results. If it was desirable to tax this home industry he should have thought that it would have been better to put a smaller tax on the whole output of coal than to put a tax on only a portion, and that the portion which went out of the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had pointed to the fact that since the tax was put on the exports had continued to increase up to last year. That was quite true, but it was rather inconsistent with the prosperity of the coal trade that there should be an increase in exports and a decrease in prices. He knew that in the county of Northumberland there were collieries on the seaboard which exported from 80 to 90 per cent. of their output. Was it not inequitable that the tax should fall so heavily on these collieries, and that it should not be felt in the collieries further inland which supplied the inland trade?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the tax required very careful watching; but there were certain circumstances which tended to increase the output which might have escaped the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the North the wages of miners depended upon ascertained prices. When prices were high, wages were high, and the miners did not work so many hours a day in order to obtain a living wage. But when the prices of coal were low, they had to work so many more hours a day in order to obtain a living wage. Consequently the output of coal was greater. It was an axiom of political economy that when the supply was greater than the demand prices must fall. The Northumberland coal trade was in competition with that

of the Westphalian Syndicate in Germany which had been nourished and encouraged by low rates and railway concessions. He would not go so far as to say that the syndicate had been subsidised by the German Government. At any rate it had not been burdened with taxation.

What was the effect of this tax on the Northumberland coal trade with Germany? Our ls. tax was a burden on the home trader and a corresponding subsidy granted by us to the Westphalian Syndicate. It therefore handicapped the home industry to the advantage of the foreign. That, surely, was a novel experiment in finance which could not be justified in argument. How was the home exporter to retain his foreign market in these circumstances? Simply by underselling the foreigner in his own market; and therefore the home trader was handicapped by the home taxation. He supposed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer knew something of the endeavour to retain the foreign market for the British trader, and that he was familiar with the complaint of what was called "dumping" in this country. He did not say that the Northumberland coal traders were guilty of the offence of "dumping;" but he thought there was a strong temptation for them to do it. Why should the Government, under these circumstances, drive them by this tax to do so? But even in the darkness of this subject there was light. He, himself, had always been a fair-trader and was a follower of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, and he could not see that the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was in any way carried out by this burden on home industry. The opponents of tariff reform always said that it was the consumer who paid the duty. That depended entirely upon supply and demand. If the supply was greater than the demand it was the exporter who paid; if the demand was greater than the supply it was the importer who paid. Every speaker had agreed that in the present case the tax was paid by the exporter. Indeed, there was another axiom of political economy well illustrated in this debate, namely, that so long as

there was competition within the tariff area, that competition would keep down the price of the commodity. For the reason he had given he had never approved of this tax and could not support the Government by his vote.

MR. BURT (Morpeth) said that on former occasions when this subject had been before the House of Commons he had spoken, perhaps, at unconscionable length, and he would have been inclined now to leave the case as it had been presented so admirably by the hon. Member for Barnsley and by his colleagues, the hon. Members for Wansbeck, Mid-Durham and for South Wales. But he represented a constituency that was very seriously and very directly affected by this tax. They had had a very interesting debate, if they could call it a debate, for, with the exception of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, not a single word had been uttered on either side in support of the tax. But the right hon. Gentleman's speech was rather half-hearted; in fact, he thought when he was mentioning the various altered circumstances under which they debated the subject that day as compared with last year, it almost meant a declaration on his part that the tax would be abolished, if not this year, certainly next. He had ventured to predict that they would not have a single Member of a mining constituency who intended to be a candidate at the next election, standing up and saying a single word in defence of the tax. Like most other Members he had an opponent. There was no particular reason why he should be exempt from opposition more than another, and considering that his opponent, who had recently been holding a series of meetings, began all his speeches by telling the electors what an excellent Member they had—of course he could have no objection to his holding as many meetings as possible at a time when he himself was not able to attend. But it was rather a significant fact that this gentleman at his very first meeting said, without anyone asking him, that if elected, he would oppose the coal tax.

The Royal Commission had unanimously decided that an overwhelming part of the evidence presented to them

went against this tax, that the tax had greatly weakened and crippled our competitive power and they gave some very reassuring evidence with regard to our coal resources. The facts and figures were almost bewildering in their magnitude. The Royal Commission of 1871 estimated our coal resources at about 90,000,000,000 of tons; but more than thirty years afterwards the recent Royal Commission stated that after nearly 6,000,000,000 tons had been taken out of our coal fields there were still over 100,000,000,000 tons of coal in Great Britain. In the case of a trade in which hundreds of thousands of men and millions of capital were employed it was absolutely necessary that it should be kept going to the fullest possible extent. It was true that abnormal conditions, such as the strikes in America, France, Belgium, and Germany had helped to maintain their trade; but to his mind it was a very unhealthy condition if miners could only maintain their existence through the misfortunes of their fellows in other parts of the world. The Chancellor of the Exchequer rather objected to distinction being made between bunker coal and other exported coal, but he certainly thought that the distinction between coal exported to and bought by foreign countries, and coal that was used by our own countrymen in British ships was a very fair one to make. He, however, was mainly interested in the effect of this tax on wages, and there was not a shadow of doubt that it bore very injuriously on the wages of miners; for the coal-exporting districts had suffered much more severely in the reduction of wages than other mining districts. The right hon. Gentleman objected to the coal tax being called a war tax; but it would never have been imposed had it not been for the war. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself admitted that, if it had not been previously imposed, he would not have imposed it at the present time.

*SIR THOMAS WRIGHTSON (St. Pancras, E.) said he had always been opposed to this tax. The right hon. Gentleman said that the tax required watching. He himself contended that the proper way to

look at this matter was to take the total cost of the article and to compare it with the price that could be obtained in a foreign country when subject to foreign competition. Let the Chancellor of the Exchequer take the nett cost of the coal in this country, add to that the charges for freight, then add this shilling, and then face the competition of Germany, which had no shilling to add to her cost. If Germany could put her coal in one penny a ton cheaper than that, England was beaten out of the market. The tax represented 17 per cent. on the present price of Northumberland coal. The case was sufficiently simple in itself. The objection to the tax was that it added to the cost. We could not add a shilling a ton to our cost without giving the foreigner the benefit of it, and the consequence was that the foreigner laughed at us and developed his collieries as fast as he could. It was perfectly evident that if we added 1s. a ton to the cost we were handicapped in competing with foreigners, but until the right hon. Gentleman took that view he was afraid he would not take the course they hoped he would adopt and abolish this foolish impost. The debate had proved incontestably, by no one getting up to defend it, that this tax was a bad tax, and he trusted it might not be long before it was taken off. He had great sympathy with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because, after all, he had to find revenue, and the area of taxation under our present system was a small one, but he thought the right hon. Gentleman might have given some indication that, if the area was widened, this would be the first burden that would be removed.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said he was somewhat surprised that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not given a straightforward promise that on the first opportunity he would relieve the coal industry of this objectionable tax. The arguments in favour of the tax had always been, first, that it was necessary to preserve our coal for the use of future generations, and second, that if we imposed this tax it would lead to a reduction of the price to home consumers. The Report of the Royal Commission had completely swept away both those fallacies.

No stronger justification could have been put forward for the arguments against this tax when it was first proposed than the Report of the Royal Commission, and if there was no justification, as appeared from that Report, for the imposition of this tax, there was no justification for its continuance any more than there was any justification for the imposition of any other tax on articles exported from this country. After the issue of that Report the right hon. Gentleman had not a leg to stand upon, and he should have made it clear that on the first opportunity he would abandon the tax.

The right hon. Gentleman made a great admission when he said under the present circumstances no such tax would have been imposed. That in itself made it quite clear that in the right hon. Gentleman's own mind, apart from the extraordinary year 1900, there was no justification for the tax. But on that occasion the then Chancellor of the Exchequer was told in this House that the coal trade was a peculiar trade and liable to violent fluctuations, and that when judging a trade for the purposes of taxation it was not fair to judge it otherwise than on an average of years. No justification had been given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the continuance of this tax. It was no argument to say that no trade, generally, was better. It was particular localities that suffered, and mining was unlike any other industry in the world. They could not stop their mines in the same way as they could stop a mill or factory. They must keep going, and the result was that if they could not get their regular customers to take their goods they had to make an effort to get customers elsewhere. The Government had no right to interfere with the coal industry and prevent it making use of all its markets, particularly when the Government was composed of gentlemen, some of whom held the opinion that we should not give preference to foreigners. We were certainly giving a great preference to those countries that produced coal.

Great production was taken as a sign of prosperity in the coal trade, but that was not his experience. His experience was the men when earning good wages did not do so much work. It was only when

their wages were low that they worked longer hours and produced more coal. It was generally found, also, that when trade was bad in this country and there was a difficulty in getting customers at home people were driven to seek customers abroad. In Durham, for instance, when the iron trade became depressed, collieries which had been in the habit of sending coal to the iron consumers immediately began sending it to the ports for shipment, with the result that prices went down and exports up. Then it was said the freights were low. But even with the low freights to France and Germany, we had been unable to maintain our position. Shipowners would agree that the shipping trade had not been so depressed for many years, and that had doubtless prevented coalowners feeling the full effects of the tax. But freights would not always remain in their present low condition, as shipowners were losing money, and there would have to be an increase sooner or later.

Then, too, in exporting to competing districts like France or Germany or Belgium, the tax had to be taken into consideration, and it affected the price all round. It was a remarkable fact that the price for practically all coal sold abroad was fixed by the rate of the lowest contract; consequently, the effect of this tax was much more far-reaching than could be at present realised. Home consumers generally obtained their coal at a lower price than foreigners, but a limitation of trade usually had the opposite effect, and if the Government persisted in making exporters accept a less price in competing markets, where the tax had to be taken into account, the price to the home consumer would have to be raised to compensate for the lower price abroad. The coal business no more than any other could be carried on at a loss, and he hoped, especially after the Report of the Royal Commission, the Government would next year decide to remove the tax, which had been mischievous in every respect since its original imposition.

*SIR WALTER PLUMMER (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said he had been waiting to hear the case stated for the tax, but

speech after speech had been delivered alternately from either side, and, with the exception of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was bound to defend it, no one had put forward a single argument in its favour. However disappointed the opponents of the tax might be at the remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the fact that the impost had not found a single supporter on either side of the House would give them great encouragement for the future, and he would be much surprised if any Chancellor of the Exchequer defended the maintenance of the duty twelve months hence. He ventured to intervene in the debate as one who had not the qualifications possessed in so high a degree by most other Members who had spoken. He was not connected with any one of the four classes pre-eminently affected by the tax. He was not a coal-owner—he wished he were—a shipowner, a coal exporter, or a miner; but he represented a place closely identified with the prosperity of all those classes. During his experience of Parliament he had never attended a debate in which the interest was more sustained than that day. The House had not been full, but every speech had been worth listening to, and none more so than that of the hon. Member for Morpeth, whom all welcomed back, and were glad to see so largely restored to health. He joined in the appeal, which he trusted might reach the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that before another year he might see his way to drop this tax.

Last year the right hon. Gentleman said, and said truly, that he was waiting for the Report of the Royal Commission, remarking that until the Report was issued he was prepared to keep an open mind on the subject. That afternoon the open mind had been changed to the watchful eye—the Chancellor stating that this was a tax which required watching. They meant to watch both the tax and the Chancellor for some little time to come. The situation had been changed, and changed entirely, since last year, owing to the Report of the Royal Commission. If an explanation was to be found for the very significant fact that not a single hon. Member had spoken on either side in favour of the tax it

was due to the circumstance that the Royal Commission had spoken so strongly and unanimously. Up to that time they might have considered that there were arguments in favour of the tax, but since the issue of the Report the whole position had been altered. The Commission had reported that the coal export trade was of “supreme importance to the country.” No words could be stronger; no adjective could be used with greater emphasis. The Commission also reported that there was no necessity to restrict this export trade, and that the export duty did restrict the trade. An hon. Member had quoted somewhat extensively the figures the Commission had considered as to the extent of the coalfields of the country, and if he remembered rightly the hon. Member said that if the trade went on as it was doing, and as he hoped it would do for many years to come, there would be sufficient coal in the bowels of the earth to last for 400 or 500 years. If that was the case he ventured to think, in view of the discoveries of science and in view of the development of electricity, that we need not husband our resources, which was one of the chief arguments advanced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol when he imposed the tax.

It was perfectly true that the Chancellor could point, as he had pointed, to the gross totals of our export trade and say with a certain amount of satisfaction that the trade was vigorous and imply that it was better than ever. But he did not think those two arguments went together. They might have a trade which was bigger but not better. [Hear, hear!] He was glad to hear that cheer from the opposite benches, because one of the arguments which he was trying to use was that the prosperity of a country, or the prosperity of a particular trade, was not necessarily measured by the volume of that trade, and though he believed that the Chancellor, pointing to the gross totals, could argue that the trade was bigger than ever, he ventured to say that when the trade was analysed, and when they took the extent of the bunker trade and the small coal trade, they would find that although they had a bigger trade in the gross, it was not better or more prosperous. If it were

Sir Walter Plummer.

so, prices would be higher and miners' wages would be going up instead of coming down.

There had been some confusion in the mind of the Chancellor, if not in the minds of certain Members who advocated the tax, between the ordinary increase in the trade and the increase upon the increase which was going on before the tax was established, and which they had a right to expect to continue in future. It was because they were not getting the natural increase upon the increase that they had an argument against the tax. He did not wish to repeat all the arguments which had been used in previous years with regard to the tax. He had not any confession or conversion to plead. He had always been against the tax, and tried to oppose it. What he would like to hear from the Government bench was a clearer recognition of the importance of the Report of the Royal Commission than they had had from the lips of the Chancellor that day. Would the right hon. Gentleman say, or would somebody say on his behalf, that he recognised to the full the importance of the Report which had been unanimously arrived at by a most able and influential Royal Commission on the coal supplies of the country? Would he say that he recognised that a Report of that character demanded his attention, and that the recommendations would be carried out on the first opportunity consistent with the financial affairs of the nation? He added his voice to the many that had been heard in favour of the abolition of the tax.

*SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham) said he wished to say a word or two against this tax. He had the honour to represent a mining constituency, and if he did not speak against a tax of this character his constituents would be justified in hauling him over the coals. The Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted that he could not initiate such a tax as this under the present circumstances. Why could he not initiate this tax now? Was it not because it could not be justified? Why did the Government cling to a tax which could not be justified? The Chancellor of the Exchequer must

see very clearly that the coal tax had not got a friend in the House, and after the recommendations of the Royal Commission it would not have many friends in the country. The right hon. Gentleman had sought to minimise the effect of the tax, but surely he could not seriously argue that the tax had not had a very injurious effect upon the industry concerned. If he did advance such an argument he would be making far too large a demand upon the common-sense of the House. The Chancellor of the Exchequer must, from his own experience, have observed the loss of a very large number of contracts for coal by reason of this tax, and that must have *pro tanto* diminished employment of labour in this country. In effect it was very much as though this country was being discriminated against by every other country in the world, not merely every foreign country, but also our own Colonies as well, to the extent of 1s. per ton. This country, in effect, was being discriminated against to that extent, but the hand that inflicted the wrong was the hand of our own Government. That being the position of things he thought there was every reason why they should be up in arms against such an obvious injustice.

It had been urged again and again in regard to the coal duty that in the long run it would be paid by the consumer. He thought, with all respect, that the reason why this tax could not be thrown on the foreign consumer was that our foreign competitors were not competing with us on equal terms. If we were competing with them on equal terms there would be a chance of levying the tax on the foreign consumer, but our foreign competitors were not subject to this disability, and that was a bar to throwing the tax on the foreign consumer. Earlier this afternoon the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil asked when the Government were going to introduce the Unemployed Bill. The position of labour in this country had been very greatly aggravated by the imposition of this tax, and there would be very much less need for Bills dealing with the question of the unemployed if the Government would show more sympathy than unfortunately they at present did

towards industrial questions when they came before the House. He very cordially supported the Amendment.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhondda) said the representatives of coal-mining districts took this opportunity of protesting against the iniquitous coal tax. He had a good deal of sympathy for the Chancellor of the Exchequer who, in proposing the reimposition of the tax, was performing a duty his heart was not in. The right hon. Gentleman had to support this tax which was placed on the coal industry by those who preceded him. He had been obliged to tell the Committee to-day that although his father punished them with whips he must punish them with scorpions. Last year they asked for bread and got nothing but a stone. They expected something better this time, but still they were disappointed.

He agreed with the hon. Gentleman who said that it was not good enough to say that they should take no notice of particular cases. This question was made up of particular cases. In South Wales nearly half of the coal produced was exported, and on every ton sold at over 6s. the tax meant a loss to the community of 1s. There had been two periods in the coal trade since the tax was imposed. In the time of prosperity they were told that the tax did not affect trade. They were told by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol when the tax was first imposed that it would not affect wages in any way. That could not be said that night. During the thirty years he had been connected with conciliation or other boards the employers had always stated that they got the last penny possible from the buyers of coal. If that was so, it followed that the 1s. duty now imposed was lost to the coalowner and the miner. When it was remembered that nearly half the coal produced in South Wales was exported, and that the 1s. tax was equal to about 10 per cent. on the value, it would be seen that the wages of the workers during the past four years must have been affected to the tune of 5 per cent. per annum. That meant that a man earning £52 a year lost £2 12s. out of his wages, and that

others who were earning higher wages lost in like proportion, yet they were told that this tax did not affect the wages of the worker. No one could go to South Wales and tell such a tale as that. Members of this House who represented communities of workers, whatever their political views might be, had no hope of being returned again if they voted for the reimposition of this tax. Hon. Gentlemen, whether on his or on the other side of the House, if they desired to come back there after the next general election, unless they pledged themselves to vote for the abolition of this iniquitous tax, would receive the vote of no miner in the country. It was evident that unless this iniquitous imposition was removed the coalowners, the coal-traders, and the shipowners would lose a portion of their profits, while the collier would continue to lose 5 per cent. of his wages. This question ought to be settled once and for ever. No more argument was needed. All that was wanted was the opportunity; and he thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was losing that opportunity now.

*MR. CHARLES WILSON (Hull, W.) said this tax was a very bad one for the shipowners. He remembered the Merchandise Marks Act, which took away a great deal of our transhipment trade with the Continent. Now it was proposed we should assist coal made in Germany to take away our coal trade, this being the effect of the shilling duty opening out the Westphalian coal-fields in competition. He knew that a shipping firm on the East Coast with some twenty weekly sailings to the Continental ports entirely depended on the export of coal to complete the cargoes of these trading steamers. They had chairmen and directors of the Great Eastern Railway Company and the Great Central Railway Company in the House. The prosperity of these two great undertakings was practically dependent on the export of coal. They could not defend this tax. He could sympathise with the colliery proprietors and the colliers who worked in the mines, but he wanted a little sympathy also for the shipowners. He desired to make one recommendation to the

Chancellor of the Exchequer, namely that he should do away with this tax and have one battleship less. That would help to cover it. It would probably be found, as a result of the war now going on in the Far East, that less reliance must be placed on these expensive and unreliable engines of warfare. He thought it his duty as a shipowner to protest and endeavour to abolish the coal tax. As an instance of the great reduction in freights consequent on the tax a contract had been entered into from the East Coast to Antwerp to carry coal at 2s. 3d. per ton over the whole season; and, if the tax remained, the carrying

trade over the North Sea from the East Coast of England would be seriously injured and in some cases destroyed. He was afraid what they said could not have much effect on this Government, which wished to interfere with trade in so many ways; and he would only say that he considered this tax one of the most serious disabilities that a great industry could suffer from, and one which was entirely unnecessary.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 167; Noes, 200. (Division List No. 183.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
 Abraham, William (Rhonda)
 Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Asher, Alexander
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Henry
 Atherley-Jones, L.
 Austin, Sir John
 Banner, John S. Harwood-
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Boland, John
 Brigg, John
 Bright, Allan Heywood
 Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burns, John
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Robert
 Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Clancy, John Joseph
 Cremer, William Randal
 Crombie, John William
 Crooks, William
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Delany, William
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Dunn, Sir William
 Edwards, Frank
 Elibank, Master of
 Ellice, Capt. EC (St. Andrew's Bghs)
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
 Evans, Sir Francis H. (Maidstone)
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
 Eve, Harry Trelawney
 Fenwick, Charles
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)

Field, William
 Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE)
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Furness, Sir Christopher
 Gilhooly, James
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
 Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
 Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
 Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
 Hammond, John
 Harcourt, Lewis
 Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
 Hayden, John Patrick
 Helme, Norval Watson
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
 Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
 Holland, Sir William Henry
 Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
 Huton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnson, John
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
 Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
 Joyce, Michael
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
 Kilbride, Denis
 Labouchere, Henry
 Lambert, George
 Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
 Lamont, Norman
 Langley, Batty
 Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Leigh, Sir Joseph
 Levy, Maurice
 London, W.
 Lyell, Charles Henry
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah

McCrae, George
 M'Hugh, Patrick A.
 M'Kean, John
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 Mooney, John J.
 Murphy, John
 Nannetti, Joseph P.
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
 O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary N.)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow W.)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
 O'Dowd, John
 O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N)
 O'Malley, William
 O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
 Parrott, William
 Partington, Oswald
 Paulton, James Mellor
 Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
 Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Rea, Russell
 Reddy, M.
 Redmond, Joan E. (Waterford)
 Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
 Richards, Thomas (W. Mon'mth)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Roche, John
 Rose, Charles Day
 Runciman, Walter
 Russell, T. W.
 Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
 Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
 Shackleton, David James
 Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
 Smith, H. C. (North'mb. Tyneside)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)

Soares, Ernest J.
 Spencer, Rt Hn. CR(Northants
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
 Strachey, Sir Edward
 Sullivan, Donal
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
 Thomas, J A(Glamorgan, Gower
 Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)

Toulmin, George
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Ure, Alexander
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
 Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
 Wilson, Chas. Henry (Hull, W.)
 Wilson, Fred. W.(Norfolk, Mid.

Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.
 Wilson, J. W.(Worcestersh. N.)
 Woodhouse, Sir J T(Huddersf'd
 Young, Samuel
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
 Herbert Gladstone and Mr.
 William M^rArthur.

NOES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
 Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn Hugh O.
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
 Bailey, James (Walworth)
 Bain, Colonel James Robert
 Baird, John George Alexander
 Balcarres, Lord
 Baldwin, Alfred
 Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W (Leeds
 Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
 Banbury, Sir Frederick George
 Bartley, Sir George C. T.
 Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
 Bignold, Sir Arthur
 Bigwood, James
 Bill, Charles
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bond, Edward
 Boulnois, Edmund
 Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F (Middlesex
 Brassey, Albert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
 Brymer, William Ernest
 Bull, William James
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, J.H.M. (Dublin Univ.
 Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
 Cautley, Henry Strother
 Cavendish, V.C.W (Derbyshire
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Chamberlain, Rt Hn J.A. (Worc.
 Chapman, Edward
 Clive, Captain Percy A.
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coddington, Sir William
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Compton, Lord Alwyne
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Dickinson, Robert Edmond
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
 Duke, Henry Edward

Dyke, Rt. Hon Sir William Hart
 Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
 Fellowes, Rt Hn Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (Mane'r
 Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
 Finlay, Sir R.B. (Inv'r'n's B'ghs
 Fisher, William Hayes
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
 Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Forster, Henry William
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gardner, Ernest
 Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
 Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
 Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
 Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
 Grenfell, William Henry
 Gretton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Gunter, Sir Robert
 Guthrie, Walter Murray
 Hall, Edward Marshall
 Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
 Hambro, Charles Eric
 Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
 Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Hay, Hon. Claude George
 Heath, Sir James (Staffords NW
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Helder Augustus
 Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hobhouse, Rt Hn H (Somers't, E
 Hope J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
 Houlst, Joseph
 Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hunt, Rowland
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt Hon. Col. W
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Sir Henry
 King, Sir Henry Seymour
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, Hn H.L.W. (Mile End)
 Lee, Arthur H (Hants, Fareham
 Legge, Col Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.

Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Col. Charles W (Evesham
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
 Macdona, John Cumming
 Maconochie, A. W.
 M^rArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M^rKillop, James (Stirlingshire)
 Malcolm, Ian
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H.E. (Wigt'n
 Maxwell, W.J.H (Dumfriessh.
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Midmay, Francis Bingham
 Milner, Rt. Hon Sir Frederick G.
 Mitchell, William (Burnley)
 Molesworth, Sir Lewis
 Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
 Montagu, Hon. J Scott (Hants.)
 Morgan, David J (Walthamstow
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mount, William Arthur
 Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon Chas. Thomson
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Samuel, Sir Harry S (Limehouse
 Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Shaw-Stewart, Sir H (Renfrew)
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Sloan, Thomas Henry
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
 Stanley, Edward Jas (Somerset)
 Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)

Stewart, Sir Mark J.M. Taggart
 Stock, James Henry
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.

Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Tuff, Charles
 Tufnell, Lieut-Col. Edward
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E. (Taunton)
 Welby, Sir Charles G.E. (Notts.)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Wilson, A Stanley (York, E.R.)

Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H. (Yorks.)
 Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
 Yerburch, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
 Alexander Acland - Hood
 and Viscount Valentia.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

————— EVENING SITTING. —————

SOUTH EASTERN AND LONDON, CHATHAM AND DOVER RAILWAYS BILL
 [LORDS] (BY ORDER).

[SECOND READING].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) said he desired to oppose the Second Reading of this Bill for the purpose of drawing attention to the bad and even dangerous state of Ludgate Hill Station, the property of these lines, and a station greatly used in the evening and the morning by a great number of those he had the honour to represent in this House. Most of the platforms were what was known as island platforms, and when they were crowded at certain hours of the evening and the morning there was considerable danger to passengers, especially in the darker months of the year. Moreover, the approaches to the station were very bad. The condition of the station was not denied by the company, nor had it been questioned in any way. Since 1898 this state of things had repeatedly been brought to the notice of the company, and yet nothing had been done, and in the present Bill, which was an omnibus Bill, no steps were being taken to provide a remedy. He fully realised that these great railway companies, although they were monopolies, had as much right to consideration and

fair treatment, and that the shareholders who had invested their money in these undertakings had as much right to fair treatment, as the public whom they served.

The Corporation of London, for whom in some measure he was speaking, contended that the condition of things at the station could be considerably ameliorated at a very small expense by the utilisation of the land which was already in the hands of the company in the near neighbourhood. They further contended that statutory powers were not necessary for this purpose; if they were the corporation, asked how was it they were not included in the powers taken by the Bills of 1900, 1901, 1903, and the present Bill? The corporation as the public authority had applied to the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade were unable to act and the Railway Commissioners had no power to interfere, as this matter was beyond their powers. The company contended they could not act without powers, for which, however, they did not apply, and the station remained a great inconvenience and danger to the passengers of this line, many of whom were his constituents. Then the company came to the House seeking powers to carry out works on other parts of their system. It was under these circumstances that he and those he represented felt that the only way they could endeavour to obtain redress was by appealing to this House in this way. He moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

*Dr. SHIPMAN (Northampton) said he took this opportunity of opposing the Bill on altogether different grounds to those stated by his hon. friend, a ground which concerned the conveyance of passengers' luggage from train to the boat. The company had a primitive method of placing all the luggage

together in a heap, and fastening it up with a rope, and so hoisting it from the train to the boat. Inasmuch as a great deal of the luggage consisted of light baskets covered with canvas or leather, considerable damage resulted from the pressure of the rope. The remedy was a simple one. It was, instead of using these ropes, to have crates or barrows or some other contrivance by which the luggage could be safely and easily moved from train to boat. He supported his hon. friend in his opposition.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Captain Norton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford) said with regard to the remarks of the hon. Member for Northampton who seconded the rejection of the Bill, he might say that there was nothing in the Bill which dealt with the matter to which the hon. Member had referred, but nevertheless he would give that matter his consideration and not be so churlish as to ignore it. He assured the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite that the overcrowding at Ludgate Hill Station was not nearly so great now as it had been in the past. He was not prepared say that it was a perfect railway terminus, but it was not without interest to point out that there had not been a single accident to a passenger there since this question was last raised in the House several years ago. This Bill had passed in another place, and before either House no petition had been presented against it. He submitted that what the House now had to consider was what was the real scope and object of the Bill before it, and the real test upon which the vote of hon. Members should be taken should be whether the measure, as it stood, carried out the object of the Bill to the convenience of the public. It was an omnibus Bill of a very small character taking powers to widen Ashford Station and other places on the line, and also to acquire small pieces of land here and there for that

Dr. Shipman.

purpose. That was all the Bill proposed to do. With regard to the question of Ludgate Hill Station, some years ago the London and Chatham Company built two considerable stations near Ludgate Hill in order to relieve the congestion of that station. He might also say a very great change was taking place in regard to suburban traffic. The tramways had already considerably reduced the traffic to and from Ludgate Hill Station, and if the project of carrying those lines across Blackfriars Bridge were given effect to the traffic would be depleted to a still greater extent. In these circumstances the company could not at present contemplate the enormous expenditure which would be incurred by the rebuilding of the station. He appealed to the House to give a Second Reading to the Bill, which was absolutely necessary for the improvement of the traffic over various portions of the undertaking, but which was not concerned at all with Ludgate Hill Station.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he believed the company had on more than one occasion admitted that the condition of Ludgate Hill Station was dangerous.

SIR W. HART DYKE: I do not admit that.

MR. DALZIEL said he believed that the general manager admitted that its condition was one that could not be defended by the company.

SIR W. HART DYKE: I refuse to admit that.

MR. DALZIEL said he could assure the hon. Baronet that that was the case.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said it was not in the correspondence which he had in his hands.

MR. DALZIEL said that was quite possible, but his hon. and gallant friend had assured him that that was the case, and he was quite prepared to take his hon. and gallant friend's assurance. On October 30th, 1899, it was admitted that the station was unsatisfactory and the

general manager then stated that plans would be prepared for the improvement of the station, especially with regard to the access to the platforms. That was at once an admission on the part of the company that there was a case for improvement. This was the only occasion on which they could attempt to obtain any consideration, and the only opportunity they had was by opposing the Bill. While he agreed entirely with the case put forward by his hon. friend, he himself would give his vote against the Bill chiefly as a protest against this company having any increased powers whatsoever. They were informed when these two companies amalgamated that the public were going to have reasonable facilities, but as a fact the amalgamation killed all competition and the state of these railways was now a public scandal and a disgrace. The management of the expresses was abominable, the Continental boat express sometimes took an hour longer than scheduled time, and the management of the company so far as its passengers were concerned was as bad as it could well be. The House ought to bear this in mind before they gave the company increased powers. So far as he was concerned he should support the rejection of the Bill.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said, so far as he was concerned, it was not necessary to enter into the question as to whether the Continental express service was good or bad; all he need point out was that this Bill had nothing to do with it, and he protested against hon. Gentlemen opposing a Bill against which they had not advanced a single argument. The only people who would lose by the rejection of this Bill were the friends of hon. Gentlemen opposite whose cause they were championing at the present moment. If there was anything wrong with the Continental expresses this was not the time to raise the question. The rejection of this measure would have the effect of stopping works being carried out. They heard a good deal of sympathy expressed by hon. Gentlemen opposite for the unemployed, but they were now opposing a Bill which would provide work for the unemployed. The directors were endeavouring to remove certain causes of complaint by improving portions of their line, and he hoped the Bill would be read a second time.

Question put.

The House divided;—Ayes, 105; Noes, 92. (Division List No. 184.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Banner, John S. Harwood-
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brassey, Albert
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J.A. (Worc.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Duke, Henry Edward
Fellowes, Rt. Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inverness Burghs)

Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
Heath, Sir James (Staffords. NW)
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford. W.)
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Jocey, Sir James
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Kitson, Sir James

Knowles, Sir Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R.)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lockwood, Lieut-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdonald, John Cumming
McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
McKillop, James (Stirlingshire)
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire)
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Purvis, Robert
Reid, James (Greenock)

Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Robinson, Brooke
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Smith, H. C. (North'mb. Tyneside)
 Smith, Rt. Hon. J. Parker (Lancs.)
 Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
 Stone, Sir Benjamin

Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tritten, Charles Ernest
 Tuff, Charles
 Walker, Col. William Hall
 Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd

Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
 Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
 Frederick Banbury and Mr.
 Galloway.

NOES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Atherley-Jones, L.
 Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
 Brigg, John
 Bright, Allan Heywood.
 Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
 Burns, John
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell, John- Armagh, S.)
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Clancy, John Joseph
 Crooks, William
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Delany, William
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
 Eve, Harry Trelawney
 Fenwick, Charles
 Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE)
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Gilhooly, James
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Hammond, John
 Hayden, John Patrick
 Helme, Norval Watson
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
 Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
 Hunt, Rowland

Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnson, John
 Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
 Joyce, Michael
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
 Kilbride, Denis
 Langley, Batty
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
 Levy, Maurice
 Lewis, John Herbert
 London, W.
 Lyell, Charles Henry
 MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Crae, George
 M'Hugh, Patrick A.
 M'Kean, John
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 Manners, Lord Cecil
 Mooney, John J.
 Murphy, John
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)

O'Dowd, John
 O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
 Parrott, William
 Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Rea, Russell
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Roche, John
 Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soares, Ernest J.
 Spencer, Rt. Hon. C. R. (Northants)
 Strachey, Sir Edward
 Sullivan, Donal
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, J. A. (Glamorgan, Gower)
 Ure, Alexander
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
 Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Captain Norton and Dr.
 Shipman.

Main Question put, and agreed to.
 Bill read a second time, and committed.

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

MR. ROBSON (South Shields) moved to add the following clause:—"On and after July 1st, 1906, the duty on stripped tobacco imposed by Section 2 of the Finance Act, 1904, and the rebates allowed under this section shall cease and determine." He did not propose on the present occasion to go over the ground which was traversed last year

when this duty was imposed, but since that time they had had a year's experience of the working of the tax, and the subject was of vital importance not only to the revenue and the tobacco trade but also upon the wider grounds of fiscal policy. He considered that it was important to examine the results of this tax, because they afforded a striking example of the fiscal measures which were now approved by the Ministry. They showed that the interests of the revenue, of a great trade, and of the consumers had been deliberately sacrificed, with no other result than to put large sums of unearned profit into the pockets of fortunate individuals. They had in this tax the first fruits of this great negative principle upon which he understood that both the main wings of the Tory Party were now united,

namely, that taxation was no longer to be imposed solely for the purposes of revenue, and this was certainly a tax of which it could not be said that it had been imposed for revenue purposes.

How far had the predictions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer been justified? That question particularly concerned the Gentlemen on the other side who supported free-trade opinions. If the grounds on which they voted for this tax had been falsified, it was now their duty to vote against it. Before the imposition of the tax, 77 per cent. of the tobacco imported was in the form of stripped leaf; and only 23 per cent. was in the whole leaf. The additional tax imposed on the stripped leaf was 3d. a pound, or very nearly 50 per cent. of its value. This was an enormous tax, especially as a differential impost. Yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer assured the House that it was having no effect at all upon prices.

Before the debate on the Budget was finished last year they had an opportunity of testing many of the arguments which had been used in favour of this tax. They had an opportunity of seeing how far the mere suggestion of this tax paralysed the import trade in stripped tobacco. And notwithstanding all these facts, the Chancellor of the Exchequer told them that a tax of 50 per cent. on this article had made no difference in the price. He thought that was an astounding statement to make. He did not know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer was prepared to defend that statement, but he urged the Committee to consider the significance of such a statement from a Minister who had charge of the finances of the country. In effect, the tax operated as one on the process of stripping done abroad. The cost of conducting that process at home, they had been told by one of the hon. Members for Bristol who was largely concerned in this trade, was something like one halfpenny per pound, but when they added all the other small charges, like interest on capital and the cost of various technical matters connected with the process the cost was at the most 1d. per pound; so that the tax was three times the amount of the cost of the process. Yet the Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer believed that the tax would continue to yield revenue, and that manufacturers would go on importing stripped leaf and paying three times as much for the stripping as they would if it were done in this country.

He wished to point out that this tax related to a far wider question. What was the fiscal state of mind of a Minister or a Chancellor of the Exchequer who believed that manufacturers would go on buying the raw material which had been taxed over 50 per cent. more than its substitutes, and moreover believed that those manufacturers would go on performing a process like stripping when in order to do it they must pay three times the cost of performing that process at home? That was the general ground of the principle upon which this tax was imposed and by which it had been defended. And now let the Committee look at the results. The Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced the tax in the perfect and happy confidence that he would get at least one year's revenue. Of course the Chancellor, owing to the conditions of the trade, was sure of getting one year's revenue, and perhaps two.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have, and you told me that I should not get it.

MR. ROBSON said that, on the contrary, he had pointed out to the right hon. Gentleman the hardship on the holders of stripped leaf in bond, and the certainty that the holders of whole leaf would make large fortunes. He felt sure that the Committee had not forgotten the personal incident which occurred last year on this point when he ventured to cast some doubt upon the standard of fiscal morals adopted by the Government, and which were then vigorously defended by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. On that occasion he showed to the right hon. Gentleman how twenty firms in the stripped tobacco trade stood to lose hundreds of thousands of pounds. How could all that sum be lost unless the tobacco was taken out of bond and the tax paid upon it? When the right hon. Gentleman desired to show that any

prediction of his had been falsified he hoped in the future he would be a little more accurate in his facts. No doubt a certain amount of stripped tobacco would continue to be imported, because the contracts for the importation of stripped tobacco were not confined to a single year. It was, however, to the imports that they had to look in order to test the efficiency of the tax.

How had the imports been affected by this tax? There were two ways of testing it—one by comparing the imports for a series of years, and the other by comparing the imports for the first four months of each of the last three years. The latter was the better method, and taking the first four months of the last three years, the imports of stripped tobacco were:—In 1903, 14,951 casks; in 1904, 15,323 casks; and in 1905 only 2,341 casks. More than that, he had been informed that the bulk of the 2,341 casks was imported to be worked in bond for export, so that it escaped the tax altogether. Did not that show that the tax had been virtually prohibitive, using the word in its practical commercial sense? It was a striking circumstance, for those concerned for the maintenance of free-trade principles, but it would bring joy to the heart of those trade-killers who called themselves protectionists. The party of “Little Traders”—that organised body for the contraction and destruction of our foreign trade—would regard with intense satisfaction the fact that the free imports to which they so much objected had in the case of this particular commodity been reduced to such an extent. But how did it compare with the promises and statements of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, when he introduced the tax, said he was not departing from the old lines of fiscal policy?

The importation had virtually ceased, but there was one branch of the tobacco trade in which dealers could not do without the stripped tobacco, the trade in the 3d. an ounce tobacco. This was a commodity so firmly established that it was extremely difficult for traders to alter the price; the trader was almost compelled to lower the quality rather than raise the price when the cost

was increased. The manufacturer of this tobacco was obliged to work very close to the 32 per cent. limit of moisture, and importing the dry stripped he could easily calculate the amount of moisture it contained, and he knew exactly how much he might safely add. But under the *regime* of the Chancellor of the Exchequer he would import the whole leaf and strip it here, and he was unable to tell exactly in stripping the stalk from the leaf how much moisture he had brought with it. The stripped leaf also was not uniform in moisture, consequently there was great difficulty in testing it, and it was by no means easy to impregnate it with exactly the right quantity of moisture. His dilemma was in knowing how much to add. If he added too little he made a loss; if he added too much he became liable to penalties. The larger manufacturers had means and appliances to meet the difficulty, but the smaller manufacturers were being squeezed out of the trade by the operation of the tax. There had been many failures recently. No one could tell exactly to what they were to be attributed, but all agreed that the difficulties put in the way of their business by the Chancellor of the Exchequer had had a substantial share in bringing about their losses and bankruptcy. He had been told that the small manufacturers when squeezed out would probably become agents for great trusts. He had always understood, however, that one of the services to be rendered by the new fiscal theories was to be the very reverse—namely, to counteract trusts. This, then, was not a very happy result for the first essay in protectionist legislation.

The right hon. Gentleman, in order to convince the House that it was not a protectionist tax, stated that it would give no advantage to the foreign stripper, but that it would simply put the stripper at home and the stripper abroad on a footing of equality. That was not altogether consistent with another part of his argument in which he stated that the tax would result in more employment at home, because it could result in more employment at home only if the foreign stripper was placed at a disadvantage. But in all protectionist arguments it was necessary in stating one half of the case

to keep the other half out of one's mind. Thus the right hon. Gentleman stated—

"I am not attempting to place home stemming in any privileged position, but to place it in a position of equality in competition with the imported article."

While later on he stated:—

"The differentiation made between whole leaf and strips by the duty of 3d. on strips is only enough to put the whole leaf and strips on an equal footing, and it is entirely the convenience of the manufacturer whether he will work with whole leaf or with strips."

Before the tax "the convenience of the manufacturer" had been to import 77 per cent. of his raw material in the form of strips, but now he imported none for home consumption. That was the result of the right hon. Gentleman's honest and conscientious, though unfortunately protectionist, effort to put the two on a footing of absolute equality! What had happened to the foreign stripper? In America they were closing down that branch of their business to a large extent, and the stalk was being brought over here. To that extent the Chancellor of the Exchequer's argument had been borne out by the result, and he was entitled to the credit.

The right hon. Gentleman had promised more employment under the new arrangements. But what sort of employment was it? Stalk constituted from 20 to 25 per cent. of the total weight of the leaf. That meant that one-fourth or one-fifth of the raw material which we brought over from America was discarded. Thus 20 per cent. additional weight had to be packed in America and placed on the railways; then 20 per cent. additional tonnage was put on board ship and carried 3,000 miles across the Atlantic. When at last it reached the manufacturer here he had to strip it, and then demand his drawback on the stalks. Before the drawback was paid, however, the rubbish had to be subjected to an elaborate process; it was necessary for the stalks to be dried, ground, analysed, and tested, before the manufacturer received back the duty he had paid plus something for the trouble to which he had been put. Thus the revenue lost by the stalks. He believed that some ingenious person had discovered that the stalks could be used as a kind of insect powder in conservatories, so that the

right hon. Gentleman had gone to all this trouble, and caused 20 or 25 per cent. of the material to be brought 3,000 miles at endless cost, simply to kill some bugs. This was the Chancellor of the Exchequer's first little infant step in scientific taxation. No excuses could blind the House and the country to the fact that one branch of our free import trade was gone, and yet they were being told continually, that in the course of this Parliament nothing would be done to touch or prejudice our system of free imports, troglodyte though it was said to be.

To convince his supporters that the tax was not excessive—notwithstanding the fact that it was 50 per cent. on the value of the commodity, and 300 per cent. on the cost of the process—the Chancellor of the Exchequer had recourse to percentages, and in the whole history of the fallacy of percentages there never was a more delightful example. He stated that whole leaf tobacco cost 5d. a pound, on which there was a tax of 3s., or at the rate of 720 per cent. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was wrong even there, because he failed to take into account the fact that one-fifth of the weight consisted of stalk on which a rebate was paid. He then went on to say that the cost of stripped leaf was 6½d. a pound, so that the tax of 3s. 3d. which he proposed to impose represented only 600 per cent. as against 720 per cent. in the case of whole leaf. But the right hon. Gentleman overlooked the simple and easy canon of taxation, that whether or not a tax was excessive depended upon the intensity or strength of the desire for the article. The desire for tobacco was with some people an insatiable craving, and even though the tax were 1,000 per cent. they would still pay it. Those who, like himself, had given up the habit of smoking knew that often they would have given £5 or £10 for a cigar if it had been merely a matter of money. There was scarcely any limit except that of the consumer's means to the amount he would pay for the thing he desired. But that was a very different thing from a tax on a process. The tax which differentiated against stripped tobacco was a tax on a process. Nobody "craved" for stripping abroad rather than stripping at home, so

that in considering the excessiveness or otherwise of the tax one had to take into account not the force of the appetite but simply how much more the stripping process would cost in one place than in another. That being so it was conceivable that a tax of even 5 per cent. might kill a particular process, while a tax of 300 per cent. was almost certain to do so. That had been the case in this instance. There was no comparison between the percentage of a tax on a process and its percentage on an appetite. The two things were absolutely distinct, and their connection involved an elementary fallacy which should have been self-evident.

The truth was that the country had now got men controlling its finances who knew nothing of economic science, and who apparently boasted that they knew nothing about it. They applied every epithet of abuse to the great masters of that science, Cobden and Mill, who brought greater intellects to the service of mankind than the protectionist Party was ever likely to possess, and he suggested that that Party, instead of abusing the great masters of political economy, should read their works.

The question then arose—Who gained by this tax? It was not the revenue, nor the consumer, nor the trade, generally. But somebody was gaining by the tax, and in order to find out who it was it was necessary to ask who had advised the tax. He thought the Committee was entitled to know that. Under the old free-trade system the country was not afraid to allow its Chancellor of the Exchequer to meet and colloque with the representatives of different trades, because, after all, taxation was on a basis so narrow that few advantages could be given to any particular trade by public burdens. But now a different system prevailed. Public burdens were held out to different trades as sources of private profit at the public expense. Under these circumstances the Committee ought to be informed who advised the tax, and then they might continue their inquiry a step further and find out who gained by it. It would probably be found that the two classes were coterminous and identical. The tobacco section of the Liverpool

Chamber of Commerce had challenged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say who the manufacturers were who advised him, and he ignored the challenge, and he took it that he would do the same that night. Those Liverpool tobacco manufacturers had asked the right hon. Gentleman to put them into communication with those who had made representations to him in favour of this tax, because they declared that it was inconceivable how any manufacturer could make such representations. These manufacturers were not political opponents of the Government, but they were Conservatives and protectionists until this tax was imposed. They were finding salvation now, and it was like a revival amongst them in the tobacco trade. The right hon. Gentleman had taken no notice of that challenge. He would not complain of that, but let them know where they stood with regard to the fiscal morals of the future. What was the standard of fiscal propriety approved by the Government? Did they think it right, defensible, meritorious, that certain men engaged in a trade should be at liberty to approach the Chancellor of the Exchequer's advisers—he did not suppose they approached him personally—

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I think if the right hon. Gentleman means to suggest dishonesty he had better make the charge directly against me. [OPPOSITION cries of "Order" and "Who said dishonesty?"] The charge should be made against the Chancellor of the Exchequer rather than against his advisers, for whose action he is responsible and desires to take absolute responsibility.

MR. ROBSON said anything more unworthy, anything more discreditable on the part of a Minister of the Crown than the interruption to which he had just listened he thought he had never heard. Was he to understand that the right hon. Gentleman—a protectionist—considered it dishonest on the part of members of a trade to go and recommend to his advisers a tax that would benefit that trade? That was what he suggested had been done, and he suggested that on the best authority. Last year he read the view

Mr. Robson.

communicated to a newspaper of one eminent manufacturer, who said he had been for some time advocating the principle on which this tax had been founded. Was that dishonest? If so, what was the honesty of the Tariff Commission? According to the construction the Chancellor of the Exchequer put upon the facts the Tariff Commission must be a gang of predatory scoundrels. ["Order!"]

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must not introduce the Tariff Commission. [Cries of "Why not?"] It has no connection with the Amendment.

AN HON. MEMBER: Really.

MR. ROBSON said he had no desire to introduce the Tariff Commission or anything like the Tariff Commission to the House, but he was bound to answer the interruption of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and as he had raised the question and endeavoured to give it a personal application, he would say that the same interruption last year enabled apparently those representing the Treasury to ignore all explanations of the remarkable increase in imports of the whole leaf just before the Budget. The right hon. Gentleman would not succeed in drawing the discussion on to improper lines by any such interruption. He should have thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not have been so ready to suppose that any hon. Member knowing him would have dreamt of charging dishonesty against him. He must know that no one would dream, either, of charging the officials of the Custom-house with dishonesty. There was no man who entertained a higher opinion than he did of the honour and probity of the Departmental officials. Nothing would induce him to suggest a word that might seem to cast the slightest slur on a body of officials of whom the country might well be proud. But when he was dealing with secret and unnamed persons who tried to get public burdens imposed for the sake of private and individual profit, then he should ask, "Is that the standard of fiscal morals which is to reign henceforth in this country?" Obviously it was. He asked hon. Gentlemen who voted for this tax last

year, upon what had turned out to be a set of wholly mistaken ideas, to reverse that vote now. He made no charges of misrepresentation—charges which were freely and falsely levied against hon. Gentlemen on that side—he only said that mistakes were then made which were natural to the protectionist state of mind; but if those mistakes were persisted in, in spite of knowledge, they became misrepresentations and something worse.

He thought the Committee were now in a position to judge of the working of this tax. The tobacco trade demanded that it should be free from this meddling and muddling, not for the purposes of revenue, but in order to attempt to create additional employment in this country. When hon. Members thought of this kind of policy being applied to every trade in the country they would realise what it meant to have a Ministry in power which had systematically defended the policy of muddling through. It would not, however, do to allow any Ministry to apply the policy of muddling through to the trade of this country, and Ministers had better keep their hands off trade altogether if they could not deal with it better than they had done in the case of the tobacco tax. In this case they had had an illustration of fatuous fiscal folly.

New clause (Repeal of duty on stripped tobacco)—(*Mr. Robson*) brought up and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) said that although he had an Amendment in his own name lower down on the Order Paper, many of the arguments that he could adduce in favour of that Amendment—which he still hoped to move—might be more effectually put forward on the Motion now before the Committee. He admitted that, although the tobacco trade were prepared to accept a compromise in the matter, the most logical way to deal with it would be to adopt the Motion at present before the Committee. He regretted that the hon. and learned Member

for South Shields had connected the subject so much with the fiscal question, and he regretted still more the innuendoes which the hon. Gentleman opposite had made, reflecting on some person or persons unnamed. He believed these suspicions were altogether unfounded, and they were disowned by the tobacco trade. He was familiar with all the arguments put forward by the tobacco trade against this differentiation, but he had never heard a syllable of suspicion uttered against any individual. On the contrary, he was confident that the trade believed that this tax was prompted by the best and purest motives.

He recalled the circumstances under which the tax originated last year. He had upon the Paper a new clause proposing that 1½d. should be substituted for 3d. as the increase in the duty on stripped tobacco, but he thought it would be better to discuss the question on the present Motion. The duty on stripped tobacco had put a stop to the trade in stripped tobacco, and the revenue derived from it had been the result, not of an import tax, but of an embargo, because stripped tobacco could not come into the country in the face of the duty. It was quite possible for the Government to lay their hands upon an article and say they would not part with it until a certain amount of money had been paid upon it, but that was not a tax. The hon. and learned Member for South Shields had explained that without this tax of 3d. stripped and leaf tobacco would be upon an equality, but this tax penalised strips to the extent of something like 300 per cent. An uneconomic industry in stemming had been created in this country, but it was of trifling value, entailing large incidental expense, and the game was not worth the candle. Another disadvantage was the possibility of the deterioration of the article by the grinding up of the stems in the tobacco. Figures had been given showing that, whereas a very large amount of tobacco leaf had been imported, a very small amount of stem had been returned for drawback. What had become of that stem? The probability was that the great bulk of it had been ground up with the tobacco, so that people were smoking

not only tobacco but a good deal of wood as well.

He could not help feeling himself that this was a tax which was contrary to the promise that no change would be made in the fiscal policy of the country during the present Parliament. It was not a revenue tax, could only be protective, and was deprecated by the trade. The tobacco manufacturers of Liverpool asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reconsider his decision in regard to this tax. They asked that it should be equalised, and if the right hon. Gentleman could not see his way to do that they desired that it should be reduced to such an extent that strips would be admitted. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would not be too rigid in this matter. During the time he had been in Parliament he had seen Chancellors of the Exchequer make a great many proposals affecting trade and commerce, but they had generally been made in an experimental way, and when it had been shown that such taxes were acting injuriously they had been withdrawn. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not profess to have the same intimate knowledge of the conditions of a trade as those engaged in it. This tax had been imposed in good faith by the Chancellor of the Exchequer after he had taken the best advice he could obtain, but it had been found by the trade to be unworkable, and they respectfully asked that it should not be retained any longer. He trusted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would say that these representations had not been altogether without effect. If the right hon. Gentleman would intimate that he was going to make some reasonable concession he would certainly not support the Amendment, but if such an announcement was not made he would be obliged to support it.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the hon. Member opposite, when this tax was under consideration last year, thought it proper to suggest that it had been suggested to him through the Customs authorities by a gentleman who, concealing his own interest in the imposition of the tax, had recommended it for the adoption of the Exchequer.

MR. ROBSON: I made no such allegation. [Cries of "Quote."]

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the hon. Member introduced in the the debates of last year the name of a manufacturer who, he alleged, had indirectly suggested this tax when he stood to profit by the imposition of the tax.

MR. ROBSON: What I did was to read what that manufacturer himself had said.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that what the hon. Member did was to attach his own insinuations. [Cries of "Quote."] He had told the Committee then that he had no communication from that gentleman before the tax was imposed and that he had only one communication afterwards, and that was through the chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue to whom this gentleman had written, stating that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made a great mistake in proposing this tax and that it had better be withdrawn. In spite of that fact the hon. Member, while asserting that he made no charges against anyone, sought once again to create an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust without a word of apology to the gentleman whom he had wronged. He certainly did not think that in this method of conducting a public controversy it was necessary for him to make a further reply. He desired, however, to say a few words on the merits of the tax itself.

The first allegation made against it last year, and repeated to-night by his hon. friend, was that it would produce no revenue. He might say, in passing, that the hon. Member for South Shields declared upon that assumption that this was the first instance in our fiscal system of a tax which was not imposed purely for revenue. The hon. Member forgot the spirit duty. A Chancellor of the Exchequer on his own side of the House had said that the rule with regard to the spirit duty should be to make it as high as they could without actually destroying the revenue. It was evident that in laying down that rule he had in

view other considerations than those of a purely fiscal nature. He himself disputed altogether the allegation that this tax on stripped tobacco was not a revenue tax. His primary reason for the action he had taken was to obtain revenue; and in the twelve months, in spite of the concession which he made last year in the duty, the Exchequer had received £400,000 from this tax. It was also alleged that the tax had stopped altogether the sale of strips. [An HON. MEMBER: No, the importation.] He would treat of the importation presently. He thought some hon. Gentlemen knew more now about the trade and the tax than they did last year, and that they should be more careful in making assertions. Let them see whether the consumption of strips had stopped altogether, as was alleged to be the case.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR said he did not say that the sale of strips was stopped. What he said was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's income from this source had been entirely, or almost entirely, derived from strips imported before the Budget of last year was brought forward.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said they were all agreed that at any rate the sale of strips was not stopped. There had, however, been a very considerable falling off in the importation of strips, as was proved by the fact that in 1903-4 there were 53,000,000 lbs. imported, and in 1904-5 only 22,000,000 lbs., a falling off of 31,000,000 lbs. There was an even more extraordinary falling off the year before, when this tax had not been thought of, for the quantity of strips imported fell off from 100,000,000 lbs. in 1902-3 to 53,000,000 lbs. in 1903-4, a falling off of 47,000,000 lbs. But that was not all. He must recall to the Committee that it had always been part of his argument for the tax that the old basis of taxation unfairly favoured strips to the detriment of the whole leaf, that was to say, that the proportion in which strips and whole leaf were imported before his alteration was not natural, and that whether his alteration was justifiable or not, which was a distinct question, it could be proved to demonstration that

the old system was not fair and that was practically conceded by his hon. friend, who did not ask them to go back, as hon. Gentlemen opposite did, to the old system, but asked that the differentiation between the two should be confined to the smaller amount which attached to strips in bond before the new tax was imposed. If, then, the argument on which he based the tax was sound at all, and if he had done no more than remedy that injustice which caused strips to be imported out of due proportion to the natural course of trade, owing to existing fiscal arrangements, it was obvious that to put the tax on a fair level as between the two would cause a larger import of whole leaf and a smaller import of strips. There were in bond at the time when the new tax was imposed 142,000,000 lbs. of strips in this country, while in the course of the passage of the Finance Bill last year, in deference to representations made to him, he put those strips then in bond or which were actually on the sea at the date when the Resolution was passed in a privileged position—they came in half-way between the duty on the whole leaf and the duty on any new strips that might be imported. Any strips imported after that date had to compete not merely with the whole leaf, but they had to compete with the strips which were privileged, because they were already in bond to the extent of 1½d. He ventured to say to the Committee that they could not fairly state the working of this tax until they had a fresh import of strips face to face with a fresh import of whole leaf.

Before he proposed this tax neither directly nor indirectly did he consult or did he receive any advice from any member of the trade. That in itself had been made a cause of complaint by some members of the trade. A Chancellor of the Exchequer could not consult the trade in an article upon which he thought of imposing a duty without giving rise to suspicions of his intentions, which might be embarrassing to the gentleman whose advice he sought and place both in a most invidious position with regard to the rest of the trade. He was, therefore, obliged to make his proposal on such knowledge as he could

command from the long experience which was naturally at his disposal. He did not claim that experience himself, but he was dealing with an article which had always been dutiable and formed the subject of revenue inspection, and to a certain extent of revenue control.

After he proposed the tax a great number of representations reached him, and more than one member of the trade told him that under the scheme of differentiation he proposed he would fail to obtain what they thought was his principal object—namely, the establishment of stripping in this country. That was certainly not his primary object in making the proposal. He did think that he should enable to be carried on in this country a process which on account of the previous unfair distribution of the tax it had been almost impossible to carry on here. He could not see that he had done any injury to the country or to the trade by the imposition of such a tax. The fact of the matter was that there was a great difference of opinion last year, and there was now, among members of the trade as to what exactly would be a fair differentiation between whole leaf and strip. That some differentiation was reasonable and just he thought any hon. Member would see. It was clear that a person carrying on a process of manufacture in this country with a duty-paid article was at a disadvantage as compared with the person carrying on the same manufacture elsewhere who was able to work on a non-duty-paying article. The system existed in regard to the tobacco duties at every stage except this one, and in regard to other Custom duties, and that some differentiation was right was, he thought, undeniable by any hon. Gentleman who would take the trouble to look fairly into the question. The differentiation he proposed was not the exact measure of extra cost caused by manufacture in this country; that he did not think he had ever pretended, because necessarily the cost varied in different cases according to the nature of the tobacco used, but that it was a fair average percentage was his view at the time he proposed it, and he did not think they had yet been in a position to test fairly or completely whether he was right or not. And he

did not think they could test it until they had got rid of the privileged strips which existed in this country before the new duty was imposed.

The hon. Gentleman opposite proposed the total abolition of the whole differentiated duty of last year; that was a suggestion for which he thought there was nothing to be said, and certainly he was not prepared to accept the proposal in any shape or form. His hon. friend behind him suggested a reduction in the amount of the differentiation, and spoke on behalf of the tobacco section of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, who had been taking an active interest in this matter. That body were the first representatives of the trade outside the House to wait upon him after the announcement of the change in the duty last year; they were an important body, but although they were entitled to say that they represented the importers and brokers, at the same time they by no means represented, he thought, the whole of the trade or of the interests concerned in the trade. They stated that they had circularised 175 firms, but he would point out that there were 380 licensed manufacturers in the country, and also that in the tobacco section of the chamber itself the memorial was adopted by a very small majority—he thought the majority was two votes—showing that there was some difference of opinion even there as to the wisdom of the exact form in which their proposals were to be put forward. When the deputation from this body waited upon him, so far from objecting to the principle of differentiation, they approved of it; their object was that the strips of which they and others were already the holders in bond should not be the subject of the tax, but provided

those strips were fairly dealt with they did not object to the principle of the differentiation. If he accepted the clause before the Committee he should obviously destroy the principle with which these gentlemen were in sympathy; if he accepted the alternative proposal of his hon. friend, he should deprive the strips which had been imported beforehand, without the knowledge of his intention to propose this tax, of the privileged position they now occupied, an action which would be met, he thought, with considerable outcry from those who suffered in consequence.

He ventured to say it was not a good thing for the trade that a change of this kind should be introduced last year only to be expunged this year. There was evidence that at any rate some members of the trade took that view, while in the journals which dealt with this subject he found that the mere suggestion that this memorial was to be presented, and that accordingly the whole question would come under review and possibly be subject to change again at the present time, caused a disturbance in the trade, and business suffered considerably in consequence. It was objected when he imposed the tax last year that by imposing it and leaving it uncertain what were to be the relations between the two tobaccos in the future, he was rendering the business more speculative and making it more difficult for importers and traders to conduct their affairs. He said then that he was conscious how serious would be the effect on the trade of uncertainty of this kind, and it was for that reason he asked the Committee to embody the tax as part of the permanent scale of tobacco duty. It would be almost a breach of faith on his part if now, when the matter first

came under review, he were to forget the declarations publicly made in that House and were to propose such an alteration as his hon. friend suggested. He would say, however, that while he thought the new scale of duties had not received, and could not receive, a fair test at the present time, it must be open to any Chancellor of the Exchequer to revise that scale when such a fair test had been taken, and when they saw how the balance was held between strips and whole leaf, when what he had called the stock of privileged strips had been exhausted. That the fair differentiation between the two was greater than was alleged by some of his critics was, he thought, conclusively proved by what had since transpired. That he might have over-estimated the amount that that differentiation should attain was possible, but was not proved. He hoped, however, he should have the courage to admit an error if he thought an error were proved, or to modify a proposal, even though it had sprung from his own brain, if he thought the facts proved that it required modification. He did not think that was the case at present, but he did not exclude the reconsideration of the exact measure of the differentiation, when they were in possession of full experience of what occurred in the competition between strips and whole leaf when the new duty was working on its merits and without any restriction or interference caused by a large body of strips being in this country on privileged terms.

MR. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster) said that the result of the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to be that in his opinion the case that the tax was not justified was not proven; but if

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

the right hon. Gentleman would continue his studies and give effect to the information which would be supplied to him before this Bill became law, he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman would accept the reduction of the duty to a penny. He ventured to put in a plea on behalf of the small manufacturers who made what was known as "twist" tobacco. It was impossible for small manufacturers to develop the twist tobacco trade in competition with such large firms as what was known as the "Combine," because the Combine could take the whole leaf, strip it, and use the stalks for certain purposes which were not available for small manufacturers. The tax was ruinous to the small manufacturers in the small towns, and really struck at one of our home industries. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he came to look at the very small amount of revenue which the country derived from this increased tax, would reduce the duty to a differential charge of a penny per lb., and thus save from extinction a large number of small manufacturers in the country.

MR. RITCHIE (Croydon) said the task set to the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year was a very difficult one. He was quite satisfied that if in the working of this tax it was found that the allegations that had been made on the other side were justified his right hon. friend would reconsider his position. He wished to ask his right hon. friend whether he would consider the propriety of appointing a small Departmental Committee to inquire into the operation of the tax, and, if the allegations against it were found to be justified, whether he would be prepared to make proposals

which would remedy what was considered to be unfair in the incidence of the tax.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said that everything that had been foretold last year as to the effect of this tax had come to pass; and it was too late now to offer a small Departmental Committee. The only revenue which had been derived from strips had been obtained from persons who held large stocks in bond or which were held on order in America before the imposition of the tax. He contended that the difference in duty on whole leaf and strips could not possibly be more than three-eighths of a penny; whereas the right hon. Gentleman had put a duty of threepence on strips, which was out of all proportion to the real value. Last year he had pointed out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, owing to the anticipation that a tax on strips would be introduced, the importation of strips had fallen very heavily and the importation of whole leaf had increased equally heavily; and the right hon. Gentleman would find that when the existing stocks of strips were exhausted, he would get no revenue from this increased tax on strips. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to accept the very reasonable proposal made by the hon. Member for Liverpool, and after that let him appoint a Departmental Committee to inquire into the whole subject. He himself was satisfied that the Report of such a Committee would be against differentiation altogether.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not think the time had yet come for such an inquiry as his right hon. friend the Member for Croydon suggested. When the time did come, when we were

nearer the point of the exhaustion of the stock of privileged strips, he would consider the suggestion which the right hon. Gentleman had made. He saw no insuperable objection to acting upon such a proposal.

*MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) said he accepted without any hesitation the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that in imposing this duty he had no idea of diverging from the free-trade system of this country which he supported in the House, but which outside the House of Commons the right hon. Gentleman denounced as an antiquated system. He thought that the result of this experiment of differentiating between whole leaf and stripped tobacco proved that the incidence of the tax was of a purely protective character. Taking the right hon. Gentleman to be sincere in his original intention, he would be well advised at the earliest possible moment to purge himself of the virus of protection. He was very much struck with the argument of the right hon. Gentleman that hasty changes were undesirable. That was a valid argument last year when this duty was imposed, but it was not a valid argument now. If a mistake had been made, now was the time to rectify it before the trade had become habituated to the new arrangement, when a change would be more difficult. The right hon. Gentleman had attacked the memorial from the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce and said it was not of a sufficiently representative character, but he would point out that memorial was sent to all the known manufacturers in Great Britain, although there might be some small manufacturers not known to the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce who did not get a copy. The overwhelming

majority of the trade endorsed the memorial presented to the right hon. Gentleman.

He did not wish to dwell on the argument of his hon. friend that the existing stock of strips being in a privileged position prevented the introduction of strips from America. He was told that the contrary was the case. He contended that the statistics proved that instead of the stemming industry being a transplanted industry, the manufacturers of this country were using the stems with the leaf in making a deleterious mixture which was sold for smoking in pipes in this country. That might seem a small matter to those who did not smoke a pipe, but he could assure the Committee that it was a very serious matter to thousands of smokers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was no doubt innocent as to this deleterious custom, but the Committee were entitled to some information as to what became of the stems unaccounted for. [The hon. Member here produced a large tobacco leaf and illustrated the operation of stripping.] The leaf which he had just stripped was not moist as it would be if he were stripping it in America, and he was not so expert at the process as the negro ladies who did it in the United States.

Some question had been raised as to the actual cost of the process of stripping. He had demonstrated to the Committee that nothing could be more simple, and that anyone, with practice, could become an expert in the profession. The hon. Member for North Bristol said last year that tobacco could be stripped in England at a cost of one halfpenny per pound,

Mr. Austin Taylor.

and that a girl at that rate could earn a good wage. He believed that that figure was well within the mark. Threepence per pound, therefore, was and must be a protective duty. He believed the right hon. Gentleman made a mistake in imposing this differential duty, because it was protective, and because he would not derive any addition to the revenue from it except from the stocks already in existence. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman, who was a conditional free-trader, during the lifetime of the present Parliament, at all events, would purge himself of the slight stain that had fallen upon his free-trade reputation owing to the imposition of this tax.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that before the debate closed he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he proposed to go further with the Bill that night.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he did not propose to proceed further after this subject was disposed of, but the proceedings of the Committee would be resumed as the first order on Tuesday. It would be remembered that his right hon. friend the Patronage Secretary, in announcing the alterations in business arrangements owing to the unfortunate indisposition of the Prime Minister, stated that if the Budget was not finished at that sitting it would be taken as the first order at the next. If the Committee stage were finished, as he hoped it would be, by half-past seven, the Report of the Navy Vote would be taken at the evening sitting.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 109 ;
Noes, 137. (Division List No. 185.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George, M. (Edinburgh)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Edwards, Frank
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Field, William
Finlay, Alexander (Lanark NE)
Findlay, Michael Joseph
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert John
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
Gurdon, Sir W. Bampton
Hammond, John
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hayden, John Patrick

Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Johnson, John
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Joyce, Michael
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
McCrae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mooney, John J.
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald

Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Rickett, J. Compton
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hon. C.R. (Northants)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomas, J. A. (Glamorgan, Gower)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Robson and Mr.
M'Kenna.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hon. Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood.
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.)
Carlike, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.

Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysnire)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Worc.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fellows, Rt. Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inverness B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes

Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'r H'mlets)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, W. Raymond (Camsb.)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Sir James (Staffords NW)
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Houlst, Joseph
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hunt, Rowland
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton

Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
 Keswick, William
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. NR)
 Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 McKillop, James (Stirlingshire)
 Malcolm, Ian
 Manners, Lord Cecil
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Maxwell, W J H (Dumfriesshire)
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Milmay, Francis Bingham
 Milvain, Thomas
 Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow)
 Morpeth, Viscount

Morrell, George Herbert
 Mount, William Arthur
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Thomas
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Percy, Earl
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Pretzman, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos Myles
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
 Smith, H.C. (North'mb Tyneside)
 Smith, Rt. Hn. J. Parker (Lanarks)

Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stock, James Henry
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tuff, Charles
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Walker, Col. William Hall
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
 Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Sir Alexander Acland-
 Hood and Mr. Henry
 Forster.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

N.) said he expected it would be issued shortly.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington), in moving that the House do now adjourn, said that he hoped to be fortunate enough to get through the Committee stage of the Finance Bill to-morrow and to take the Agricultural Rates Bill on Wednesday.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—
 (Sir A. Acland-Hood.)

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.) asked when the Report of the Commission on Trinity College, Dublin, would be issued.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. ATKINSON, Londonderry,

MR. FLAVIN said they had heard that for the last ten or twelve days.

THE WAR IN THE FAR EAST.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) asked the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether he had any news about the great naval engagement in the Far East.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): His Majesty's Government understand, of course, that there has been a naval engagement near the Straits of Tsu Shima in which the Russian fleet has suffered a reverse, but we are not in a position to make any statement.

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 30th May, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with:—London and North-Western Railway.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

London Gas Bill. A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

Shepton Mallet Gas Company (Electric Lighting) Bill [H.L.]. The consent of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments.

Hitchin and District Gas Bill. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Birmingham Corporation Bill; Swansea Corporation Bill; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.]; Stockport Corporation Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill; Blackpool Improvement Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Higham and Hundred of Hoo Water Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendment agreed to.

South Metropolitan Gas Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Formby Township Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

London Gas Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Mostyn be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Newton; read, and agreed to.

Great Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 18th and 19th instant discharged, and Bill committed.

Acton Sewage Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on Thursday the 11th May discharged, and Bill committed.

Highland Railway Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Barrymore Estate Bill [H.L.]; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Croydon Gas Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill; Accrington Corporation Bill. Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. Brought from the Commons and read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 95.)

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill. To be read 2^a on Friday next.—(*The Earl of Denbigh*.)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. To be read 2^a on Friday next.—(*Lord Kenyon*.)

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a (according to order).

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill. Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Friday next.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill. House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3^a on Friday next.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

PETITION.

LICENSED HOUSES.

Petition for early closing of; of the Rotherham and District Sunday School Band of Hope Union; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3385. Hayti and Santo Domingo; No. 3386. China (Hankow).

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

RAILWAYS CONSTRUCTION FACILITIES ACT, 1864.

Certificate of the Board of Trade for the construction of a railway from Ewell to Long Grove. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NAVAL AND MILITARY MEDALS BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendment. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House to be received on Friday next.

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND), (NO. 2) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment; and recommitted to the Standing Committee.

EXTRADITION BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Friday next.

THE CASES OF THE "FRESHFIELD" AND THE "NUTFIELD."

LORD MUSKERRY: My Lords, I rise to ask the noble Duke, who is representing the Board of Trade in your Lordships' House in the absence of the noble Marquess the President, a Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether the inquiries promised by the Board of Trade into the cases of the "Freshfield" and the "Nutfield" have been held, and, if not, when they will take place.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, the noble Lord is aware that a Court of Inquiry has been ordered, but the whole of the evidence necessary to be laid before the Court is not yet forthcoming. The ports from which the ships sailed were American, and it takes some time to get the information necessary to be laid before the Court. As soon as that information is obtained an inquiry will be held.

NON-PROVIDED SCHOOLS.

*LORD KINNAIRD: My Lords, I rise to ask His Majesty's Government whether, in view of the compulsory abolition of fees in non-provided schools as determined by the London County Council, to take effect from March 31st last, whereby—(1) Serious injury will be inflicted on many parents who gladly pay fees to enjoy the privileges of a

better class school; (2) Serious and heavy useless expenditure must fall upon the ratepayers if, in consequence of the action of the London County Council, these schools have to be closed and fresh buildings erected at their expense; (3) Serious hardship will be done to many schools entirely dependent upon fees for the maintenance of their building; (4) Serious hindrance to the cause of good education may follow the closing of schools by driving the pupils into private establishments where they are lost to public control; His Majesty's Government will consider the desirability of taking some steps which will give the managers time to formulate some plans to mitigate the hardships which threaten to destroy many highly efficient non-provided schools.

My Question has reference to a certain number of schools in London which are thoroughly efficient and have been so for a great many years past, and the parents of the children attending these schools desire that the fees should continue to be charged. They were consulted at the time the fee grant was offered, and, in common with some other schools, they declared that they would prefer that the custom which had gone on so long, and with which they and His Majesty's Inspector were satisfied, should continue. Then came the recent Education Act. The London County Council decided that after March 31st last all fees should stop. This left the class of schools to which I am referring in this position, that the funds out of which they had hoped to be able to carry out the improvements which they quite expected they would be called upon to effect were taken away from them.

When March 31st came some of us again approached the parents and asked whether they still wished the *status quo* to be maintained, and whether they would become subscribers in order that the funds necessary might be raised so that the schools could be retained at the same standard at which they had been kept for some years past. I will mention the case of a school which I have specially in my mind, but there are others just as efficient. In that school we received about £925 in fees, and when the County

Council swept that away it was a serious blow to the managers of the schools which, I may say, was not attached to any church or chapel or any body likely to step in and make up the loss. The parents of the children attending the school thereupon agreed to become subscribers to the extent of over £400 a year. It then looked as if we might be able to get along and continue to carry on the school as the parents wished, and it seemed that everybody would be fairly pleased with the arrangement. The school is one which rather better class children attend, and it is clear that a serious hindrance to the cause of good education may follow if the course adopted results in driving the pupils into private establishments where they are lost to public control. The County Council think that it is desirable that other children should be brought in, and you can quite understand that the parents who have assessed themselves as voluntary subscribers with the view that their children shall attend a school of a somewhat better grade than the ordinary board school strongly object to this.

We were quite prepared to receive demands to make certain alterations. I do not know how many of your Lordships, as managers or trustees of schools, have had occasion to study the interesting document which I hold in my hand. It comprises 384 pages, 220 of which consist of demands upon schools. I have no doubt that there will be plenty of work for some time to come for the architects and builders and the great number of people who will have the spending of this money; but I do not know whether the ratepayer will be equally pleased when he has to pay the bill. That is, of course, a matter of some importance, though this is not the proper occasion on which to discuss it at any length. There is one other point which, I think, is a serious one from the point of view of the interests of the ratepayers. If these schools are shut up simply through what I may describe as a fad on the part of the London County Council to abolish all fees, and destroy the independence of parents who wish to pay a proportion of the expense of the education of their children, it will be a very costly matter for the ratepayers.

I can quite imagine that to erect a fully-equipped school in the West End of London would cost between £90,000 and £130,000. I ask whether it is desirable that the step proposed, which might involve the closing of a number of schools, should be taken in a hurry; and without giving time to see whether these schools cannot, in some way, be worked into the system of secondary education, or be dealt with in some other way, so that the wishes of the parents may be carried out; for no one doubts that the education which is given in these schools is of a high character. I have called attention to this question in your Lordships' House in order that, if possible, the London County Council may be urged to hold their hand in regard to this proposal, which, if carried out, will lead to considerable extravagance. I am not standing up to defend buildings which are inadequate. We do not for a moment deny that school buildings ought to be thoroughly efficient in every way; but notices have been served in some instances for the erection of certain partitions, the necessity for which is somewhat doubtful, and this has been followed by the further requirement that new windows, which would have been quite unnecessary if the partitions had not been erected, should be provided. I should like to know whether His Majesty's Government think there is any possibility of curbing the anxiety of the London County Council to abolish all fees, with the consequent risk of shutting up these schools, and of having to spend millions sterling in order to erect fresh buildings to provide the necessary accommodation for children at present attending schools which would have to be closed.

LORD BURGHCLERE: My Lords, before the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Education answers the Questions of the noble Lord I should like to ask him, with regard to the main Question on the Paper—namely, whether His Majesty's Government will consider the desirability of taking some steps which will give the managers time to formulate some plans to mitigate the hardships which threaten to destroy many highly efficient non-provided

schools—whether he is aware that the London County Council have, since the appointed day, given these managers very nearly a year in order to consider this important subject. That surely is sufficient time. I should like also to ask the noble Marquess whether he is aware that the County Council were in consultation with some of the managers, and were informed by those managers that they themselves were very willing that these fees should be abolished.

The noble Lord treated this subject as being one for only a few moments' conversation, but it does seem to me that this series of interrogatories which he has placed on the Paper raises the whole question of fees, and though it may be that fees are necessary and useful in certain especial cases, yet I venture to think that on the whole the system is not one which is beneficial to education generally. I hold that the payment of fees at all is opposed to the system of education laid down by the statute of this realm, and which is undoubtedly the logical corollary of the compulsory Act; and in confirmation of that view I would draw your Lordships' attention to the official explanation of the Elementary Education Act of 1891, popularly called the Free Schools Act, which was issued by the Board of Education in that year. In that explanation the Board of Education point out that every father and mother in England and Wales has a right to free education, without payment or charge of any kind whatever, for his or her children between the ages of three and fifteen; and it proceeds—

“The right to free education is not a concession to poverty, but is common to all classes alike. It must be wholly free, without any charge for books, slates, or anything else, and it must be at a school within reasonable distance of the child's house.”

Strictly speaking, the Board of Education has no right to make or sanction any distinction whatever between elementary schools. What the noble Lord who has raised this question asks the Board of Education to do is practically to go behind the Act of 1902. If the insidious eloquence of the noble Lord was to prevail with the President of the Board of Education it is obvious that he would be breaking the statute which he himself had passed in 1902.

There is another great objection, in my opinion, to this fee system which the noble Lord wishes to continue, in that it creates a class distinction in the schools where it exists. It is quite possible that in some parts of London, especially in the richer parts, parents may in no way object to paying a fee for the education of their children, but it is necessary that in all such schools, which are in receipt of fee grants, there should be provided, in addition to places for the children who pay fees, places also for free education; and it may well come about that in the neighbourhood of the schools where the majority of the children pay fees, there may be poorer parents who would not like the invidious distinction which would obviously be made between the children admitted free, and those whose parents paid fees. It raises another question which was dealt with in the explanation of the Education Act of 1891, to which I have referred—namely, that the schools should be within a reasonable distance of the homes of the children; because it is quite obvious that if the parents of these poorer children are unwilling to send them to the school close at hand on account of the invidious distinction between those who pay fees, and those who do not, they may have to go to some free school very far from their place of domicile, and the intention of the Free Education Act will not be carried out.

It is quite clear that to carry out what the noble Lord wishes, the Board of Education would have to bring in a fresh Act *ad hoc* for this purpose; and we were told yesterday in another debate that it was not wise so soon after the passing of a great Act to bring in another Bill on the same subject. I cannot say that I saw the force of that reasoning on that occasion, but I would venture to think there is very great distinction between what the most rev. Primate wished to do yesterday, and what the noble Lord wishes done to-day. What the most rev. Primate wished to do yesterday in regard to the Licensing Act was merely to add a clause to that Act, but if the wish of the noble Lord, Lord Kinnaird, is carried out it will be necessary to repeal Clause 14 of the Education Act of 1902—a very different matter; and I should think that would be a tinkering

with a great Act which will not receive the sanction of His Majesty's Government.

I now come to what I may call the main objection to the contention of my noble friend Lord Kinnaird. It is this. The non-provided schools, by the Act of 1902, were allowed to maintain their special and denominational character, mainly because, by voluntary contributions, they kept up the structure of the schools; but it is quite obvious, from the innocent Questions of the noble Lord, that that is not his opinion at all. He wishes to maintain the structure absolutely by the fees received. It is perfectly true that in certain circumstances the local education authorities may take a portion of the fees for maintenance of the structure of the schools; but only a portion. Some part is to be provided by voluntary contribution. But the noble Lord wishes to keep up the structure of non-provided schools out of fees alone. That is not in accordance with the intention of the Education Act. The noble Lord said there would be a serious hindrance to the cause of good education if these children were driven into private establishments, where they would be lost to public control. Dames' schools, where they were inefficient, have been suppressed by the authorities, and where they were efficient they have been allowed to be used as schools to which parents may send their children. If that is not public control of private establishments I do not know what is.

I said just now that one of the objections to the noble Lord's demand was that it would create class distinction. I will take the case of the Westbourne non-provided school, which I think the noble Lord knows something about. The fees at that school amount to, roughly, £2 12s. 0d. a head, which is higher than what is generally the case. This school petitioned against the abolition of fees, because they said the school met a special need and that if fees were abolished an influx of poor children from the neighbourhood would ensue. I ask what is the use of a public elementary school, maintained by public grant, if it is not for the education of these very children which the noble Lord wishes to exclude? I venture to

hope that in the interest of public elementary education the noble Marquess will not listen to the suggestions of the noble Lord, but uphold the action of the County Council in abolishing fees all over the Metropolis.

LORD CHELMSFORD: My Lords, I hope your Lordships will extend to me that indulgence which is always shown to one who addresses the House for the first time. I feel I ought not to keep silent on this occasion, because I happen to be both a member of the London County Council and of the education committee whose conduct is impugned in the Questions of the noble Lord. I have every sympathy with the arguments put forward by the noble Lord, and voted in favour of them on the education committee; and I think that noble Lords who happen to be London ratepayers will entertain a feeling of regret that some £26,000 of voluntary contributions, which amount will now have to be found out of the rates, has been abolished. I venture absolutely to traverse what the noble Lord who has just sat down said with regard to the effect of the resolutions of the County Council. I have been connected now for some six years with education. I have been associated with secondary as well as private schools, and am perfectly aware that where it is a question of dealing with the elementary class of children you can always force those children into an efficient school if the school in which they are getting their education is not up to the mark; but there are a large number of children who are just on the border line between elementary and secondary, and it is those very children whom we ought to be anxious to get into our best elementary schools. Those children have very often had their education in schools which cannot be described as educationally efficient, and yet public opinion, I believe, would condemn any attempt on the part of the education authority to close these particular schools. I think that is an increasing danger and one which the noble Lord opposite, Lord Burghclere, has not really appreciated.

I regret that the noble Lord opposite has put this Question to the noble Marquess, in the first place because there

Lord Burghclere.

can be only one answer to it, and that, in my opinion, must be a refusal to go into the question at all, for it is the incontestable right of the London County Council, if they choose, to abolish fees in all these schools; and, in the second place, because I think that the nature of the Questions, and perhaps the speech of the noble Lord in asking the Questions, to some extent insinuates that the London County Council in this matter has been actuated by animus against the voluntary schools. I have had a year's experience of their work, and, though I am an opponent of the views of the majority in the County Council and the education committee, I should like to repudiate any such idea. The London County Council have been actuated in this matter, not by animus against voluntary schools, but by the weighty arguments which can be adduced on the other side. Whether they are sufficiently weighty to get rid of the arguments advanced in the series of Questions on your Lordship's Paper I leave the House to judge; but, still, I believe, they are arguments which are entitled to respect.

The first argument used by those who wish to abolish fees is the very obvious one, when you have compulsory education, that it is extremely difficult to enforce compulsory attendance if you have schools in which fees are charged; and a second argument which can be used, and which is very nearly allied to the other argument, is the difficulty of finding accommodation for children whose education has to be provided. If you have in a district a school with high fees it is extremely difficult to know, and the Board of Education must have found it so time after time, how much is to be allowed for vested interest in that district, and whether it is right to set down a free Board school beside it. I mention this because there are arguments which can be used on the other side as against the arguments brought forward by the noble Lord.

I regret the Questions on a broader ground still. Attacks are made on the working of the present Education Act, but, so far as London is concerned, I feel emboldened to say that the London County Council have strictly administered

that Act, and that no one can say that anything that the County Council has done has been outside the law. I believe that, within the limitations of the Progressive creed, the County Council do intend to make the working of this Act a real success. They may be extravagant in their ideas, and in their expenditure; they may be exacting in their demands; and I am not prepared to deny that there may be grounds for dispute, and the Board of Education may have to modify the demands made by the County Council with regard to voluntary schools. I have come this afternoon straight from the education committee, which has been debating this question, and one after another of the leaders of the Progressive party got up and said that, whatever the demands they were making might be, they were prepared to meet the managers of voluntary schools in a reasonable and generous spirit; and, if that is so, I think the Board of Education will probably have little to decide as between the one and the other.

Remedy with regard to these matters does not lie here. You have got to convert the electorate who return the County Council. The Prime Minister the other day gave advice to municipal bodies. He said that every municipal body should cut its coat according to its cloth, but I am afraid that at the present moment the majority on the London County Council think there is ample cloth out of which to make a coat, and the electorate in London seem to agree with them in that opinion. The only thing for us who disagree to do is to attempt to convert the electorate, and I hope the noble Lord who has asked this Question will give us his best help to fight this battle when the next County Council election comes round. I regret that just at this juncture, when very difficult questions will have to be settled between the County Council and the managers of voluntary schools, any Questions should be put in your Lordships' House insinuating that the County Council has any animus against these bodies.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I should like to add a few words in support of the arguments which have been adduced by the noble Lord opposite. I think I

may be permitted, in the name of the whole House, to say how pleased we were to hear him take part in his debate. We think his contribution to the debate an extremely able one, and that he has shown a fair and impartial spirit in the arguments he has used. I am sorry that a noble Lord who hails from the same side of the Tweed as myself should have raised this question. After all, the argument of Lord Kinnaird is one in favour of retaining a class distinction amongst scholars in our schools, of keeping up the class of schools which consider themselves rather better than the ordinary public schools, because fees are charged in them. From time immemorial in Scotland, at any rate, that sort of distinction has not existed, and we have found children from all ranks attending the same public schools and being educated together with the greatest success. I think we as Scotsmen should be only too glad to see that system adopted here, and the benefits arising from that extended to this country.

This question in London is not, after all, of a very extensive character. The total number of schools charging fees in the Metropolis in June last was only 179, and the fees varied from a nominal fee of 1s. a year to 9d. a week. The largest sum received by any individual school was £1,254 a year, and the total received from fees in all these schools was only £26,525, which is not a very large sum in comparison with the huge total cost of education. I contend that the London County Council in adopting their present policy, have endorsed the principle of free elementary education of the people provided by the public, and have strictly followed on the lines adopted by the London School Board previously. It is the fact that the County Council provides the education in the non-provided schools, although it does not provide the fabric of those schools, and therefore I venture to argue that it is only simple consistency that the education should be free in the non-provided as well as in the provided schools, and I hope, therefore, that the noble Marquess at the head of the Board of Education will not yield to the suggestions of my noble friend, but will support the action of the London County Council in this respect.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, before I reply to the Questions that have been put to me I should like to associate myself with the noble Lord who has just sat down in congratulating my noble friend behind me on his extremely clear and lucid speech, and I would venture to express the hope that having now broken the ice he will give us the advantage of hearing him in future debates. He has concisely stated the view which, as representing the Board of Education in your Lordships' House, I hold with regard to the Questions put to me; but I hope my noble friend Lord Kinnaird will not think that because I hold those views I deprecate for one moment the Questions he has asked or the speech which he delivered. I am afraid, however, that I can only give him the answer that we can do nothing in this matter.

The London County Council have undoubtedly acted within their power as local education authority, but I very much doubt whether the action they have taken in compulsorily abolishing fees in non-provided schools is conducive to educational interests. I have no doubt in my own mind that it is not in the interest of the ratepayers; and, parenthetically, I would like to point out that the high rate for elementary education in London and some other parts of the country at the present time is due, not to any new requirements of the Board of Education, but to the action of the local authorities themselves. I learnt for the first time, from the observations of Lord Burghclere, that the London County Council had consulted the managers of these schools with regard to their action; and I was about to observe that if no such consultation had taken place the managers of these schools, which have done so much for the education of the rising generation, had not been treated with the fullest courtesy.

The chairman of the education committee of the London County Council has contended that the remission of fees is a necessary corollary of the Act of 1902. But I think that gentleman, as well as noble Lords opposite, has overlooked the

fact that the Elementary Education Act of 1891 did not prohibit fees to be charged, though it gave parents a right to claim free education. That Act specially recognised that in certain cases it might be desirable on educational grounds that fees should not be abolished. The Act of 1902 undoubtedly gave the local authority the power which has been exercised by the County Council, but I do not think it altogether contemplated its exercise in this manner. I do not see, in the speech of the chairman of the education committee to which I have alluded, that any really good or valid reason is given for the abolition of these fees, which will, I am afraid, result in the closing of some, I hope not of a great many, of these schools. There was no compulsion whatever on the parents of the children attending these schools to pay fees if they claimed free education for their children. There is undoubtedly a place in the educational system of London for such schools; and by abolishing the fees the County Council are depriving those parents who are willing to pay them in return for the educational and personal advantages which their children receive, of a right they have enjoyed up to the present time.

I agree with the noble Lord opposite, Lord Kinnaird, that great hardship will be done to schools dependent upon fees for the maintenance of their buildings, and that serious and useless expenditure will fall upon the ratepayers, if schools which were doing good work are closed and buildings to supply the educational wants of the children are erected at the expense of the ratepayers. If all the freepaying children in these schools were to be rehoused by the County Council, it would cost from £700,000 to £1,000,000 at least. The noble Lord on the Front Bench opposite, Lord Tweedmouth, told your Lordships that the fees in London amounted to £26,000 a year. It has been customary under Section 14 of the Act of 1902 for the local education authority to take one-half of that sum, the other half going to the managers; and consequently to abolish all fees means that the sum of £13,000 will be lost to the ratepayers. Therefore, I cannot see that great good will accrue

from the action which the London County Council have taken. Lord Welby, the chairman of the finance committee of the London County Council, spoke out very strongly the other day on a subject on which I have frequently addressed your Lordships, the subject of economy; and he impressed upon the County Council that if they were to do their duty by the ratepayers they must give special attention to the financial effect of educational proposals. He added that, although he believed that education should be promoted, a too rapid increase in the rates would create a reaction which would retard the progress of education. I share Lord Welby's view on that question. The noble Lord opposite, Lord Kinnaird, has asked whether the Government would consider the desirability of taking some steps which would give the managers time to formulate some plans to mitigate the hardships which threaten to destroy many highly efficient non-provided schools. The Answer to that Question rests with the local authorities. I believe that in the interests of the parents, of the children, of education, and of the ratepayers, the local authorities would do well to encourage great voluntary efforts. Although the Board of Education can do nothing in this matter, the noble Lord has my sincere sympathy

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY:

My Lords, I should not have ventured to address your Lordships to-day had it not been for the speech that we have just heard from the Minister in charge of the education of the country, which to my mind throws such a light upon what I did not myself need much light thrown upon, but what I may call the whole atmosphere and feeling of the Board of Education with reference to the law they have to administer, that I feel compelled to notice one or two of the points in that speech. He, of course, had to admit that he had no power to do anything in the matter raised in the noble Lord's Question, but the whole of his speech was full of sympathy with the noble Lord and clearly expressed a desire to do all he could in this direction. The noble Marquess is at this moment engaged in carrying on a civil war with a large portion of the people of this country, and

the section who are engaged in that war have largely taken up that attitude from a profound distrust of the feeling and tendency of the Board of Education over which the noble Marquess presides.

If I may be allowed to travel from the main question and follow the noble Marquess in some points which he mentioned but which are not really raised by the notice on the Paper, I would take up his challenge that it was not fair to put upon the Board of Education responsibility for any part of the increased rate which people are complaining of throughout the country. I wish at once to traverse that statement, and to say that it is very largely owing to the action of the Board of Education that the rate has been put up. There are two things which the Board of Education might have done in their modifications of the Code. They might have required those structural reforms which Lord Cross's Commission, ten years ago, said had been too long delayed and ought to be enforced. Any alteration in the requirements of the Board of Education with regard to structures would have fallen mainly on those private managers with whom the noble Marquess has so much sympathy, and consequently there has not been the slightest alteration in the Code as to what should be done there. On the contrary, the noble Marquess the other day at Poole gave an assurance to his audience that he was considering how he could relax those structural obligations, clearly with a view of easing the position of the ill-built schools of which local authorities are now complaining. But, on the other hand, when we come to questions affecting the maintenance of the school, the staff, and so forth, which fall on the ratepayers, the Board of Education have given amplitude to their Code which enables them greatly to increase the stringency of their requirements and the yearly cost of maintenance.

When Mr. Lloyd-George's party in Wales claimed that they were maintaining the denominational schools there at the level of efficiency which had satisfied His Majesty's inspectors and the Government in 1901, the Board of Education replied that they had nothing to do with the standard in 1901, and

that the standard which they were entitled to enforce was that of the Code for the time being; and everyone knows that the Government inspectors, backed up by the Board of Education, are in school after school demanding steps greatly in excess of what was hitherto the minimum. There is no minimum in the Code now, for the Code contains a paragraph which says that they shall consider all the circumstances. I am not complaining of pressure being brought to improve the standard of education and the qualification of teachers, and to diminish the size of classes. All these things are good things; but I cannot let the Department which is exercising this pressure say that their action is not increasing the cost of education to the ratepayers. In the mere matter of pupil teachers, about which we had a debate last year, the increased cost of preparing those teachers has become enormous in consequence of the new regulations transferring them to the secondary schools up to sixteen, and only allowing them for two years as half-timers in the schools. I do not, as I have said, complain of steps being taken to improve the education of the country, but I do complain of the noble Marquess and his Department saying that the increased cost is all the fault of the local education authorities and that the Board of Education has nothing to do with it. At the same time it is showing the animus of the Department, for, while they do not mind what they put upon the ratepayers now that the ratepayers have to bear the burden of maintenance, they have not in any way increased the stringency of the requirements which rest upon the managers.

Coming to the Question asked by Lord Kinnaid, the noble Marquess said that in the schools specially referred to there was no exclusion. There has been no exclusion since April 1st, because on that day fees ceased to be demanded, and therefore it is an obligation resting on the managers of those and similar schools to admit children who apply. I could tell the noble Marquess that the Westbourne Park School and similar schools have been the greatest hindrance to education in Paddington for years. Ever since I first went on the London School

Board that part of London has suffered from a deplorable lack of school provision. We were continually making representations to the Board of Education that owing to the high fees these schools were unavailable for the poor population of the district, and we asked that the vacant places in these schools should not be counted against us in our desire to provide new schools. There were three specially high fee schools, and though these schools had a large number of vacant places and were not available for the district, nevertheless we were told by the Board of Education that they would not entertain the proposal that these vacant places should be deducted from the available accommodation of the district.

The Westbourne Park School pre-eminently was a hindrance to the education of the district. It was a class school—a genteel school for the lower middle class, who were not to be contaminated by rubbing shoulders with common children. As a matter of fact, this school, which is a good school of its kind, did draw children from other parts. It was a collecting ground for what I may call the children of the lower middle class. That made it all the greater grievance in this district, these school places not being available for the children of the district. It was high time that that should cease. I can tell the noble Marquess that this class snobbishness is much more superficial than you would believe. I should like to ask Lord Kinnaid, who says the children in the Westbourne Park School will be driven to private academies, how much the roll has fallen since April 1st. They have had nearly two months in which to flit. Will the noble Lord say that 100 have left? We have no evidence that any have left. We went into all this when we freed the schools under the London School Board. We freed all the schools—those frequented by the children of the well-to-do, and those frequented by the poor, and we found it made no difference.

I think it is very desirable that we should, if possible, break down any feeling of caste in the public elementary schools, and get children of all classes to study together side by side. My belief is that that is very easily done if you do not

play up to this demand of people for social exclusiveness. I do not believe that this school, if it is well conducted, will lose 100 of these children. What will happen will be this. I dare say a number of children who came to this school by train because they could get exclusiveness by the payment of this fee, will settle down at a school nearer home and save their railway fares. If the London County Council were to order their education committee to get a return of the children on the roll on April 1st and those now on the roll I am confident that the bugbear about driving the children to incompetent academies would disappear altogether.

The noble Lord opposite, in his maiden speech, spoke of a loss to the ratepayers of £26,000. The total fees in London amounted to £26,000, and on the basis on which the London County Council have worked, the loss to the ratepayers would be £13,000, which is about $\frac{1}{2}$ th of a penny rate. But I will undertake to say there will be no loss to the ratepayers at all. Schools charging fees create friction and difficulty in getting children to school, and render a certain amount of accommodation practically unavailable. Therefore if the London County Council retained these dandy schools they would be compelled to build other schools for the non-fee paying children, while at the same time these schools would have vacant places, and that would far outbalance any loss to the rates through not getting a share of the money paid in fees. I regret the attitude taken by the noble Marquess, and should have thought that the best education of the country would be the paramount object of his Department.

THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S: My Lords, it is with diffidence that I take part in this debate and follow the noble Lord opposite, whose experience in education both in London and in Wales has been so wide, and whose devotion to it is so sincere. If I am not mistaken, no President or Vice-President of the Education Department has ever appeared to the noble Lord to be worthy of anything but the penitent's stool, and it is to be hoped that the next President will be able to satisfy the noble Lord. I have been a

teacher for twenty years, and was surprised to hear him refer with very faint praise to the important regulations for the training of pupil teachers. Personally I think the step taken in that matter was a very wise step. Then I understood the noble Lord to say that he did not approve of the Board of Education pressing for progress in the staffing of schools.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: I beg the right rev. Prelate's pardon. What I said was that while I thought the improvements in the training of pupil teachers and in the staffing of schools were for the good of education, they had cast a heavy burden on the rates, and therefore the noble Marquess was not entitled to say that no increase in the education rate was due to the action of the Board of Education.

THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S: I take it that the noble Lord's contention is that progress in staffing is good, but progress in structure is better.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: Not at all.

THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S: I contend that until the burden of education is made more national in character and the system of local taxation greatly reformed the amount that can be levied by way of rate for education in this country is strictly limited. We have, therefore, to make this choice, whether it is more important in the interests of educational progress to incur expenditure on the teaching staff or expenditure on structure. Of course, I put on one side all questions such as ventilation and sanitation. As one who has been a teacher for many years I assert that anyone who knows the practical work of a school from the inside will agree that the first charge should be an ample expenditure on the teaching staff. The noble Lord referred to the noble Marquess as making a civil war on somebody.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: I said a civil war was raging.

THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S: It does not alter my point. I am (not aware that there is anything going on in

Wales that can be accurately described by such a phrase, and I hope the noble Lord will take a more cheerful view of the character of my countrymen. The noble Lord referred to voluntary schools as badly built, badly drained, and badly equipped. If there are any buildings within the sphere of operations of the local education authority over which he presides which are in this condition, I am sure the noble Lord will see that the authorities do their duty; but I would point out that at the date of the passing of the Education Act there were as many provided as non-provided schools in Wales the buildings of which were in need of repair and improvements, and the pace at which the managers of the non-provided schools are attending to these matters will compare very favourably with the pace of the local authorities in the same direction. I am not in a position to criticise the noble Lord's remarks about particular schools in London, but I am quite sure that I have the highest authority behind me when I say that there could not be a greater educational heresy than that staffing should come second to structure.

BRITISH TRADE WITH GERMANY.

VISCOUNT RIDLEY rose to call attention to the despatch of the late Lord Salisbury [Cd. 1630] of July 28th, 1897, in which the British Government inform the German Government that, in the negotiations for a new treaty of commerce with Germany, they will be happy to consider any suggestions for improved stipulations; and to ask whether, in view of the importance of the question to the commercial interests of the country, it is possible for the Government to make any statement as to the present state of negotiations. He said: My Lords, the passage to which I wish to direct your Lordships' attention is at the end of the despatch from the Foreign Office on July 28th, 1897. It runs thus—

"Her Majesty's Government feels confident that the Imperial German Government will share their wish for the conclusion of a new and mutually satisfactory treaty, in the negotiation of which Her Majesty's Government will be happy to consider any suggestions for improved stipulations which may be suggested by the experience gained during the

period of over thirty years for which the Treaty of 1865 has subsisted."

The treaty with Germany, which gave us the privilege of the most-favoured-nation clause, was denounced on the ground that it stood between us and the action of our Colonies in fiscal matters. In the words of the despatch from which I have already quoted—

"Certain of the British Colonies, which are all comprised within its operation, find themselves committed by treaty to a commercial policy which is not in accordance with the views of the responsible Colonial Ministers, nor adequate to the requirements of the people."

The Foreign Minister went on to say that certain provisions of the treaty—

"Constitute a barrier against the internal fiscal arrangements of the British Empire, which is inconsistent with the close ties of commercial intercourse which subsist, and should be consolidated between the mother country and the Colonies."

I have read these extracts to make the position perfectly clear to your Lordships. I do not wish to refer to the reasons which induced this country to denounce the treaty; they are matters of debate under another set of considerations. But what I do wish to call your attention to to-day is the fact that as the result of the step then taken in the interest of the Colonies, this country is now, so far as I can gather, without any treaty from Germany involving the stipulations of the most-favoured-nation clause, and at the same time we are face to face with a great revision of the tariff by the German Government, in the process of which the other States of Central Europe bear a considerable part.

The present system is that our trade relations with Germany are governed, not by the treaty which existed from 1865 to 1897, or by any other treaty, but by an Imperial Ordinance which is renewed from year to year, and which in its main provision is similar to the treaty denounced in 1897, but which obviously, from the fact of its being an ordinance renewed from year to year, can offer no security or reasonable expectation that its provisions will last. It is quite true that we have under this Imperial Ordinance the provisions of the most-favoured-nation clause, but I am one of those who think

that these provisions are very illusory. As the noble Marquess who presides over the Foreign Office pointed out in this House in February of last year, only 2½ per cent. of the goods which this country imports into Germany get the advantage of the most-favoured-nation clause. Whatever may be the advantage of that clause it is under the present system purely temporary, and we have no guarantee of the permanence of the small advantage we may have.

Why is it that this arrangement is only a temporary one? I have looked carefully through this White Paper and all the Government Papers which I can discover bearing upon the subject, and I find nowhere any indication that any more satisfactory treaty has been concluded, and I am forced to the belief that the reason why this matter stands in this position is that shortly after the treaty was denounced the German Government became engaged in a great revision of its tariff. As your Lordships know, the tariff has recently been passed and published, and the German Government have also published the treaties which have been concluded on the basis of that tariff with the Central European States. Your Lordships are, of course, familiar with the process by which this is done. I have looked through the Papers and find no indications that this country has established any permanent treaty with Germany on the basis of the new tariff, or on the basis of any tariff whatever. The Question I wish to ask is whether we are to rely for the advantages we may have under the most-favoured-nation clause or in any other way on the negotiations carried out and brought to a successful conclusion by the Central European States.

That the dangers of the new position are not illusory I will venture to prove to your Lordships in a few words. The new German tariff has not been published very long. It is a very complicated and intricate document, and I do not attempt to say that I have mastered it in any sense of the word, but I have done my best to make myself acquainted with its provisions and the new situation which is created by it, and I find that, taking the textile trades, in which this

country is largely concerned, there are a great number of articles on which the duty to be imposed under the new tariff has been increased from an average of thirty per cent. to an average of eighty per cent. These are, of course, only rough figures. I find that upon many other articles the duties are similarly increased, although I freely acknowledge that on many articles the duties are reduced.

I then tried to discover how the trading community regard the new position. I find that a number of chambers of commerce are very apprehensive of the result of the new tariff. The Chamber of Commerce of Newcastle and Gateshead passed a resolution declaring that with reference to articles manufactured in the United Kingdom the rates of duty under the new tariff, speaking generally, are prohibitory or almost prohibitory, and they say that most of the duties to be levied on machinery are so serious that it is difficult to see how trade can extend or even be maintained between the United Kingdom and Germany. I would like to know whether we have any reasonable hope of establishing a treaty with Germany. That our Foreign Office is alive to the situation I am well aware. You have only to study the correspondence contained in this White Paper to see the anxiety of our representatives abroad in watching over the interests of our trade. I do not raise this question in any captious spirit or with any desire to in any way embarrass His Majesty's Government. I would be only too glad to be told that we have the prospect of dealing in a spirit of negotiation with the German Government, and of obtaining those advantages from them which the happy trade relations subsisting between this country and Germany entitle us to have. I would conclude by asking the noble Marquess whether, with the weapons in his hands for dealing with foreign matters, he can hold out any reasonable hope that there are negotiations proceeding with Germany which promise some advantages to our important trade with that country.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the noble

Viscount very naturally took as his point of departure the despatch of Lord Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles in 1897, immediately after the denunciation of our treaty of commerce with Germany. The denunciation of that treaty, as your Lordships will remember, was due to the fact that, in Lord Salisbury's words, the treaty constituted a barrier against the internal fiscal arrangements of the British Empire, a barrier inconsistent with the close ties of commercial intercourse which subsist and should be consolidated between the mother country and the Colonies. Lord Salisbury went on to say that, while His Majesty's Government were for this reason constrained to terminate the treaty, they were anxious to commence negotiations for a new treaty from which the stipulations of Article 7 should be omitted.

The matter was certainly not put on one side, because in the immediately following years communications did in fact pass between the two Governments upon the subject of a renewal. A draft treaty was even proposed by us, and a counter treaty was proposed on the side of the German Government. But these overtures produced no effect, no doubt mainly because each side persisted in its own view in regard to the question upon which the difference had originally arisen: I mean the right of the Colonies to form special arrangements as between themselves and the mother country, of which the advantages were not to be extended to any foreign country. The Parliamentary Paper from which the noble Viscount quoted carry the history of those transactions a good deal beyond 1897; and the noble Viscount will find in the last Paper of the series a despatch addressed by me to our representative in Berlin, in reply to the note received from the German Government, in which, once again, Germany on one side and Great Britain on the other placed upon record the manner in which they regarded this question.

I will not quote these Papers, as they are already in your Lordships' possession. They show, I think, that each side was perfectly well able to appreciate the point of view of the other. The discussion was carried on in a friendly spirit, and both the German note and the

British despatch ended with the expression of a hope that the question might be further discussed. It was suggested on behalf of the German Government that the discussion should take the form of an exchange of ideas in regard to the means of obviating the present difficulty, and His Majesty's Government expressed themselves willing to approach such a discussion in the most conciliatory spirit. That carries us up to 1903. But the situation has been complicated by the promulgation of a new German tariff, the termination of German treaties and agreements with European Powers, and the substitution for them of new treaties and agreements.

The noble Viscount described the manner in which the new German tariff affects the trade of this country. I certainly shall not contradict his statement that the effect of the tariff is distinctly unfavourable to British trade, the more so because it comes upon the top of a former tariff which was in itself of a restrictive character. A Report upon the operation of the tariff, which, as the noble Viscount truly said, is an extremely complicated document, was laid before Parliament not long ago by the committee of the Intelligence Department of the Board of Trade, a committee which has the advantage of being assisted by competent representatives of British trade. But, while it is the case that the tariff is distinctly unfavourable to our interests, it is also true to say that at some points its effects are mitigated by the fact that at this moment we enjoy the right of most-favoured-nation treatment at the hands of Germany. I am informed that the total value of the British exports which most severely experience, or would most severely experience, the effects of the new German tariff is £3,700,000, and that of this sum £1,700,000, not quite half, have secured reductions of duty indirectly as the result of the commercial negotiations which have taken place between Germany and other foreign Powers.

The other Powers have obtained certain reductions of the tariff on certain articles, and we, under our most-favoured-nation treatment right, have these advantages, such as they are, extended to us. But

it is perfectly true that our right to most-favoured-nation treatment depends upon a law of the German Reichstag which has been annually renewed, and our tenure of the privilege is therefore absolutely insecure. We are really in this position: whatever mitigations of the tariff we have been able to secure for ourselves have been obtained as a sort of by-product of the negotiations which have taken place between Germany and other Powers; and even these advantages are only secured to us by a most-favoured-nation agreement which may be terminated at any moment. Therefore I entirely agree with the noble Viscount when he says that he regards our situation as far from being satisfactory. I do not think it is satisfactory that our commercial interests should depend upon a terminable arrangement, or upon, so to speak, the crumbs which have been allowed to fall into our lap in consequence of negotiations between other Powers and Germany.

That is the situation described in a few words. I should certainly be very sorry to dismiss the idea of obtaining some improvement in that unsatisfactory condition of things; and I cannot help thinking that there should be materials for an arrangement mutually advantageous to the two Powers. The fact that we treat the imports coming to this country from Germany with extreme generosity suggests the idea that we should be able by an honourable and business-like transaction to obtain something in return from the German Government. But up to the present moment we have not seen our way to approach seriously negotiations directed to that end. It is only quite recently that we have become aware of the precise operation of the new German tariff; and I think it must be obvious to your Lordships that, considering what differences of opinion exist in this country upon these subjects, considering that there is so much doubt as to the manner in which the people of this country regard the whole of those problems which we are in the habit of grouping under the title of the fiscal question, the conditions at present existing are scarcely favourable for approaching so important a new departure. I shall, however, none the less

cherish a hope that under different and more fortunate circumstances we may be able to place the position of our trade with Germany upon a footing more satisfactory and less precarious than it occupies at the present time.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I have only a few words to say, and these will be directed entirely to the concluding remarks of the noble Marquess, that this very important commercial treaty with Germany cannot be satisfactorily dealt with owing to the uncertainty in the mind of the country with regard to the fiscal system. The noble Marquess knows that I differ from him on the question of retaliation, but could there possibly be a stronger argument in favour of the contention advanced over and over again from this side of the House, that this fiscal question should be settled as soon as possible in the only way in which it can be settled, by referring it to the constituencies in a general election? This important treaty is only one instance of the difficulty arising owing to this question not being settled, and we contend that it ought to be settled at once.

House adjourned at half-past Six o'clock, to Friday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 30th May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Bangor (County Down) Water and Improvement Bill [Lords]; Nottingham Corporation Bill [Lords]; University College, London (Transfer), Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Skegness Water Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (No. 16) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 4).

Mr. DE TATTON EGERTON reported from the Committee on Group 4 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Tuesday, 20th June, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Bootle Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Barrymore Estate Bill [Lords]; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to — Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill; South Oxfordshire Water and Gas Bill, without Amendment.

Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill, with an Amendment.

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Otley Improvement Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to — Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend and extend the Workmen's Compensation Acts, 1897 and 1900; and for purposes incidental thereto." [Workmen's Compensation Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Baron Barrymore to restore certain forfeited leases in the town of Tipperary; and for other purposes." [Barrymore Estate Bill [Lords].]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for extending the limits of supply of and for conferring further powers upon the North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Company; and for other purposes." [North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords].]

PETITIONS.

SUPPLY OF ELECTRICITY BILL.

Petition from St. Pancras, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VOTING DISQUALIFICATION (POOR LAW) REMOVAL BILL.

Petition from St. Marylebone, against; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Forres, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).

Petition from Longton, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

NURSES REGISTRATION BILL.

Petition from St. Marylebone, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (PROGRESS AND CONDITION).

Copy presented, of Statement exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India during the year 1903-4. Fortieth number [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 180.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3385 and 3386 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Intermediate Education (Ireland). Accounts of Receipts and Expenditure for 1904, with Report of Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 181.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Calves used for Production of Vaccine Lymph.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, having regard to the fact that the carcasses of upwards of 1,000 calves, which were vaccinated at the Local Government Board vaccine station for the production of lymph, have recently been sold for food in London, will he arrange for the carcasses of all animals which have been used for the production of vaccine lymph to be destroyed.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) I am advised that there is no evidence whatever that the carcasses of animals used for the purpose referred to are thereby rendered unfit for food. The destruction of the carcasses would, moreover, involve a large additional charge upon the Exchequer, amounting probably to some £4,000 a year, and having regard to these considerations I am not prepared to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member. I may add that the carcasses

are thoroughly examined by a veterinary surgeon before being allowed to be sold for food.

Report of Dr. Reece on Liverpool Small-pox Hospitals.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Report of Dr. Reece on the Liverpool smallpox hospitals is based entirely on spot maps, and that the medical officer of the Local Government Board has stated that other sources of infection ought to be taken into consideration; and whether, seeing that the Fazakerley Hospital, condemned in the Report of Dr. Reece, received the approval of three of the Board's inspectors, he will take steps to withdraw the Report in question in view of the above facts.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) Dr. Reece's Report sets out the facts with regard to the incidence of smallpox in the neighbourhood of the three hospitals referred to in it, and these facts are illustrated by means of the spot maps annexed to the Report. He has stated the circumstances in relation to the Fazakerley Hospital, but he has not condemned it, and I see no sufficient reason for withdrawing his Report as suggested. I may add that the medical officer of the Local Government Board has not expressed any opinion in explanation of the facts recorded by Dr. Reece.

Post Office Electrical Works at Portsmouth Dockyard.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the Postmaster-General were extensive electrical works carried out by the Post Office in Portsmouth Dockyard between May and September, 1904; if so, for what purposes were these works undertaken; what was the total cost of them; what was the total amount of wages expended on the works; how many men were employed thereon and for how many days; and what overtime was paid for.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) Extensive telegraph works were carried out in Portsmouth Dockyard by the Post Office engineering staff during 1904 and the

early part of this year. The purposes were to reconstruct on modern principles the telephone systems of the Admiralty and War Department, and to render communication more rapid and more efficient. The total cost was about £7,500. I am unable to give the other details, for which the hon. Member asks, without a special examination of accounts, which would involve a considerable expenditure of time and money.

Precedence in the Postal Service—Londonderry and Portadown Travelling Post Office.

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether it is a rule of the Post Office service that officers senior in point of service take precedence over their juniors; whether he is aware that, on the day mail sorting carriage running between Londonderry and Portadown, the Portadown officer is always placed in charge, although frequently he is the junior of the staff engaged; if so, whether he can state the reason for this departure from the usual practice; and will he give directions that it should be discontinued.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) I have no information on the subject of the hon. Member's Question, but I will make inquiry on the subject, and let him know the result.

Aliens serving Terms of Imprisonment exceeding Three Months in British Prisons.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state how many aliens in England are now serving terms of imprisonment whose sentences exceeded three months, and how many of these prisoners came to this country as immigrants.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.) I would refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to a Question asked on the 12th of April † last, which was circulated with the Votes on the 13th; and to the figures in Volume 3 of the Report of the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration. A special Return showing how many aliens are now serving terms of

over three months' imprisonment, such as the hon. Member suggests, would involve a great deal of additional labour to the prison officers, and the result would be of less value than the figures we already possess. The last part of the Question could not in any case be answered. The prison authorities can furnish the number of persons of alien birth, but they cannot supply information as to how they entered this country.

Abolition of Stamp on Delivery Orders.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, in view of his proposal to abolish the duty on bonds, whether he can say when the ld. stamp on delivery orders will be abolished.

(Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.) The abolition of the stamp on delivery orders cannot take effect until the date of the passing of the Finance Bill.

Gambling in Stocks and Shares—Suggested Legislation.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the depreciation in the prices of Consols and other Government and trust securities and the fluctuation in railway shares, he will consider the need of proposing similar legislative measures to prohibit bear sales and fictitious dealings in these and all other securities dealt with in the British stock exchanges, such as Leeman's Act of 1867 does with regard to joint stock bank shares; and whether, seeing that the French Government passed, in February, 1901, a similar law prohibiting such gambling operations in Russian bonds and stocks, and that the Belgian Parliament has at present under consideration a similar law with the object of preventing international fictitious dealings on their stock exchanges, he will suggest an international conference to be held to consider this matter.

(Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.) I am not prepared to take any such action as the hon. Member suggests.

Title of the late Amir of Afghanistan.

COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): To ask the Secretary

† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 1387.

of State for India when the late Amir of Afghanistan used the title of king; whether it was recognised by the Government of India; and whether it appears in any official documents previous to the Treaty of the 21st of March, 1905.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.)

The late Amir appears to have first used the title of king in his communications with the Government of India in 1896. His adoption of the title did not need the recognition of the Government of India, which recognises the independence of Afghanistan; and, as stated in my Answer to the hon. Member of the 26th May,† it was not questioned. The letter of 1896 to the Governor-General, using the title, was an official document.

Action of the Police at Longford County Races.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain why the police force in Longford rendered no assistance to the stewards of the Longford county races to preserve order on the course at Greenfield, Longford, on the 17th May; whether any secret instructions were given to them to refrain from giving any active assistance for the preservation of order and the safety of human life; and whether he has any report showing that a man was killed at this meeting, and as to the conduct of the police in keeping order on this occasion.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The police attended these races for the preservation of the peace. The regulations prohibit the employment of police in keeping the course at races unless their services for that purpose are specially applied for, in which case a charge is made. No complaint against the police has been received in connection with the circumstances in which a man was knocked down and killed when trying to stop a runaway horse at these races.

Turbary Rights on the Granard Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state who are the

trustees of the bog on the Granard (counties Longford and Leitrim) Estate; how often they meet, and whether they have any power to regulate complaints made by persons aggrieved by reason of deprivation of turbary or the like; whether he is aware that in 1897 Thomas Whitney, of Lettergullion, purchased his holding subject to a right of turbary on Derawley Bog No. 2, for which the vesting order provides; that, on application of the tenant for his turbary rights, the bailiff told him he had no turbary for him, and that on application to the Land Commission a reply was received that the case was under consideration; and, if so, will he direct the Estates Commissioners to take this man's case into immediate consideration with a view to his getting the rights to which he is by vesting order entitled.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The vesting order in Whitney's case vested with the holding certain turbary rights in Derawley Bog, but the Land Commission were not parties to the deed appointing the trustees and creating the trust of the bog, and they have no information as to who the present trustees are or as to how they discharge their trust. The Estates Commissioners have no power to intervene in the manner suggested.

Maconchy Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of Michael Whitney, of Aghadowry, county Longford, who refused to purchase his holding on the Maconchy Estate because the rent of the holding was too high; and whether, in view of the rent paid by the former tenant, a bailiff, and of the fact that the other tenants on the Maconchy Estate got reductions of over 40 per cent. on their rents being fixed by the Land Commission, the Estates Commissioners, with a view to enabling this tenant to purchase, will inspect his holding before passing the sale.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) An application has been lodged for the sale of this estate, which comprises, amongst

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlvi., 1533.

others, the holding of Michael Whitney, but no agreement for the purchase of this holding has been lodged. The Commissioners will direct their inspector to inspect and report on Whitney's holding and as to the reasons for his refusal to purchase

Delvin Petty Sessions—Case of Luke Gibney.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in a case against Luke Gibney on a charge of offensive and threatening language, heard at Delvin Petty Sessions, the plaintiff having declared he was not afraid of defendant, Mr. Olphert, R.M., the presiding magistrate, called upon the police sergeant to make an information which he dictated to him, and upon which the defendant was bound to the peace; and whether, in view of this proceeding on the part of the magistrate, the rule of bail will be withdrawn.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) This case was heard in July, 1902, and the rule of bail expired in July, 1903. I cannot enter upon a consideration of the magistrate's decision. It was open to the defendant to test the legality of the decision by proceedings in a higher Court.

Irish Protestant National Teachers' Union.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he has received an appeal from the Irish Protestant National Teachers, pointing out the prejudicial effect upon them of the present managerial system in Ireland; and what action, if any, does he propose taking in the matter.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) A resolution to the effect stated was passed by the Irish Protestant National Teachers' Union twelve months ago, and was considered by the Commissioners, who did not consider any change in the system to be necessary. The matter is one for the Commissioners.

Position of Mr. S. E. Stronge in National Education Office, Dublin.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state who appointed Mr. S. E. Stronge to his present position in the National Education Office, Dublin; for what term is the appointment made, and when does it terminate; does he receive extra remuneration for his services and who performs his duty as senior inspector; if the duties he is now performing are those for which the Commissioners have appointed two chief inspectors at a special rate of salary; and, if so, whether he will explain why these duties are assigned to Mr. Stronge instead of chief inspectors, and what work is now assigned to the chief inspectors other than that which Mr. Stronge performs for them.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The Board ordered that one of the senior inspectors should be brought to the Education Office for special duty, and Mr. Stronge was the senior inspector selected. His term of employment was not defined, and it cannot be stated when it will terminate. Mr. Stronge receives no extra remuneration. His duties as senior inspector are performed, during his absence from circuit, by Dr. Bateman, district inspector. Mr. Stronge is not performing any of the duties of the chief inspectors.

Retirement and Pension of John Shanley from Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state why John Shanley, Lugboy, county Roscommon, who was employed as a detective on the occasion of the visits of the late Mr. Parnell and the hon. Member for Cork City to the United States and Canada, was allowed to retire from the Royal Irish Constabulary at forty-three years of age; how long was he employed as a detective; and what is the amount of his pension.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) Sergeant John Shanley retired on pension, on the ground of ill-health, in October, 1891. He was awarded a special pension of £52 per annum, because his incapacity was due to an injury received while on

duty. He was for some time employed as a detective, but it is not now possible to state for what length of time. I cannot give any information as to the occasions on which he was so employed.

Arterial Drainage in Ireland.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state if the Government intend to do anything in respect of improving the arterial drainage of Ireland; and, if so, what acts are to be done and what measures are to be proposed.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) I propose to appoint a small Commission, as I announced on Wednesday last.

Irish Education—Special Consideration Granted to Certain Teachers.

MR. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that special consideration, and a consequent rise in salary, has been granted to certain teachers appointed to principalships subsequent to April, 1900, on the ground that they acted as substitutes for principal teachers prior to April, 1900, while equal service as assistant teacher has not received special consideration; and, if so, will he state why the Commissioners of National Education have made this distinction.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) In the case of certain teachers who acted as substitutes for principal teachers before April 1st, 1900, special consideration was given to the fact that they had so acted in fixing their salaries on permanent appointment as principals subsequently. Assistants in the service prior to April 1st, 1900, received, as a rule, on promotion to principalships, initial salaries equal to their salaries as assistants, but if they were highly classed special consideration was given to the fact in fixing their initial salaries as principals. Service as an assistant was not regarded by the Commissioners as "equal service" with that of a teacher acting for a principal teacher,

Government Civil Employment for Army Reservists.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any distinction is made in recommending Army Reservists who have served only three years with the colours and those who have served a more extended period in obtaining established appointments in the Civil branches of the Government service; and if he will explain why the War Office have informed Reservists employed in an unestablished capacity at Glasgow Post Office, who had only performed three years' service with the colours, that they were ineligible for established appointments.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.) No distinction is made by Army agencies in recommending men if they have the minimum of three years' service required by the Post Office. The promotion of such men to established appointments rests with the Post Office authorities. As regards the last part of the Question the War Office has no information on this point; the regulations, however, are fully set forth in the Instructions for Civil Employment, Appendix III.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Rifle Clubs.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that rifle clubs form no part of the system of national defence, he will take steps to secure that members of such clubs shall not be liable to be hanged as *franc tireurs* in case of a war of invasion.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): Articles 25 and 26 of the Hague Convention, 1899, define lawful belligerents. If the requirements set forth in these Articles are fulfilled by rifle clubs, the members of such clubs will not, under the Convention, be liable to the extreme penalty suggested by my hon. and gallant friend. I have little

doubt that, in order to serve their country effectually, members of rifle clubs would, in time of war, gladly conform to the requirements of the public law of nations.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): I suppose these members of rifle clubs are real men and not spooks?

MR. FREDERICK WILSON (Norfolk, Mid.) asked whether, when the £50,000 per annum now promised to rifle clubs for the second time was really given, steps would be taken so to regularise their position that they would no longer run the slightest danger of being hanged as Churchuses.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not know whether the Question is put seriously. If it is I can only say I cannot look far enough into the future to enable me to reply.

The Indian Earthquake—Gurkha Officers' Claims.

***SIR H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth):** I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether anything, and, if so, what, has been done to assist the Gurkha officers in rebuilding their private houses, and also their mess room, which were destroyed by the earthquake at Dharmasala.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (MR. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I am at present not in a position to reply to this Question. As I stated in this House on the 23rd inst.,† the Commander-in-Chief in India has submitted certain proposals to the Government of India for concessions, the nature of which has not yet been reported to me. Any proposals which the Government of India think well to forward will be most favourably considered.

The Naval Battle in the Far East.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): May I ask whether His Majesty's Government have any information to communicate now to the House with reference to the naval engagement, and especially whether they have received

any telegram from our naval attaché with Admiral Togo?

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (EARL PERCY, Kensington, S.): No, Sir; I am not in a position to make any other statement except the general statement I made yesterday. Perhaps I ought to add that it is manifestly impossible for His Majesty's Government to anticipate statements of this kind, which the Japanese Admiralty will themselves make when they think proper.

Dog Licence Fines.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the number of fines and the total amount produced thereby which have been inflicted on owners of dogs by collectors of the Inland Revenue during the last three years; and whether, in view of the fact that such proceedings conflict with the principle of the Magna Charta that no freeman shall be disseised of his freehold except by the law of the land, and seeing that they are not clearly sanctioned by Section 35 (1) of the Inland Revenue Regulation Act, 1890, he can undertake that they shall be discontinued.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): In reply to the first part of the Question, I have to say that the records kept by the Inland Revenue do not present the statistics desired in a collected form, and I am therefore unable to give the exact figures, but I believe that the following are approximately correct:—Number of cases, 46,000; amount received, £8,800. As regards the second part of the Question, I am quite unable to follow the reference to Magna Charta, or to see the bearing of that document on the facts complained of. It is always open to an offender to appear before a magistrate if he prefers it, but the greater number prefer to avail themselves of the alternative offered by the Inland Revenue. I see no reason for depriving them of this choice.

MR. LOUGH: But does the right hon. Gentleman seriously say he approves of

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlvi., 1119.

46,000 fines being inflicted without any control at law?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: In these cases it very often happens that the offence is not a wilful one but is due to negligence or carelessness. In these cases the Inland Revenue offer the offender the option of paying a small fine instead of being taken before a police magistrate, at whose hands they would be liable to a much higher penalty. If the offender chooses to accept the milder alternative I see no reason to interfere.

MR. LOUGH: But is it legal?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, perfectly legal, and even compatible with the rights of the British freeman under Magna Charta.

The Suez Canal.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if his attention has been called to the declaration on May 22nd of a dividend for the past year by the Suez Canal Company which will give the British Government a dividend for the past year of nearly 28 per cent., free of taxes, on the investment of £4,000,000 in 1875; and, if so, whether he will consider the desirability of refunding to British tonnage passing through the canal last year some proportion, say 5 or 10 per cent., of the dividend, having regard to the charges it had to meet to earn such an income for the company.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: According to the announcement in the public Press, a substantial reduction in the shipping dues will be proposed at the annual meeting of the company. I should not be justified in proposing a grant in aid of a particular section of British shipping on the ground stated in the Question.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I shall call attention to this matter at the earliest opportunity.

Relief Works for the Unemployed.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the President of the Local

Government Board whether he can state the amounts expended by the Metropolitan boroughs on works for the relief of the unemployed during the year 1904; and whether he can give similar information concerning the county boroughs of England and Wales.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am not in possession of the information for which the hon. Member asks, but a Return was recently moved for by my hon. friend the Member for Chelsea for the purpose of showing the amount expended in wages by the Common Council of the City of London and by the councils of the metropolitan boroughs for work undertaken specially for the purpose of providing work for unemployed workmen during the six months ending on March 31st, 1905. I hope that this Return will shortly be issued.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Can the right hon. Gentleman give any indication when we may have the Second Reading of the Unemployed Bill?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I am afraid I am not in a position to do so.

Irish Land Purchase Instalments.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that tenants who have purchased their holdings in districts where there is no bank have to pay poundage charges for postal or money orders by which payment of their purchase instalments is made; and whether he will take steps to relieve them of this impost.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): No application for the exemption suggested by the hon. Member has as yet come before me; and I do not see what valid reasons could be urged in support of it. If any could be urged I would be willing to listen to them.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): We will give you some.

Committals for Contempt of Court in Ireland.

MR. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether the recent judgment of the Chief Baron in reference to committals for contempt of Court in Ireland has been brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor; and, if so, can he state the result.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. JAMES CAMPBELL, Dublin University): Yes, Sir. The Lord Chancellor informs me that he has not found that any complaint has ever been made of the working of the system which he introduced in 1899 in reference to prisoners committed for contempt of Court in Ireland. He will, however, consider whether any improvement can be effected, but the Crown Office rules would be quite inappropriate to the Chancery Division.

Valentia Island Transit Facilities.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in consequence of the withdrawal of the Clyde Shipping Company's steamer from the south-west coast service, an increased cost of carriage of goods falls on traders in Valentia Island, and that delay and consequent damage to goods is caused by the existing ferry arrangements; and whether, pending the improvement of the pier at Reenard and the ferry service under the Marine Works Act, he will take steps to secure that the railway company will make suitable arrangements, both as to ferrying and storage, for the regular delivery of goods at Valentia.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I understand that this steamer called at Valentia once a month, and sometimes more frequently, if cargo offered. The withdrawal of the service will no doubt cause some inconvenience to the traders in that place, but it is not in the power of the Congested Districts Board to secure from the railway company a better ferry service.

Irish Petty Sessions Clerks.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will give the number of petty sessions clerks referred to in the Return issued on the 20th inst. who had served in the Royal Irish Constabulary, with the names of such men, their districts, and the amount of constabulary pension in each case.

MR. WALTER LONG: I will communicate this information to the hon. Member.

Irish Local Government Board Auditors.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the name of the one of the seventeen Local Government Board auditors in Ireland who holds a certificate as an accountant.

MR. WALTER LONG: Mr. C. E. Browne.

Irish Local Government Book-keeping.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that after the passing of the Local Government Act a system of book-keeping for local authorities was devised by Mr. Ellis, a Local Government Board auditor in Ireland; that Mr. Ellis registered these books, caused them to be printed, and sold them to the various unions, asylum committees, and other bodies over which the Local Government Board exercises control; whether he can state if any royalties or profit have accrued to Mr. Ellis in connection with the sale of these books; and whether the Local Government Board sanctioned this arrangement.

MR. WALTER LONG: The system of book-keeping for local authorities was not devised by Dr. Ellis, but by the Local Government Board with the assistance of their audit staff generally. The Answers to the remaining paragraphs of the Question are in the negative.

MR. MACVEAGH: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to say Dr. Ellis did not

make any arrangement to derive a royalty?

MR. WALTER LONG: I mean to say exactly what I have said.

MR. MACVEAGH: By whom were they copyrighted?

MR. WALTER LONG: I cannot say.

MR. MACVEAGH: That is my Question; I shall have to put it again.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg further to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the new account books specified under the Public Bodies Order, 1904, of the Local Government Board in Ireland were devised by Mr. Ellis, Local Government Board auditor; if so, whether they have been registered; and whether Mr. Ellis will derive any profit from the sale of these books to public bodies over which the Local Government Board exercises control.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir; but the Board consulted all their auditors when the Orders were being prepared. The new forms of account have not been copyrighted, and it is open to local bodies to obtain them from any printer they may think fit.

MR. MACVEAGH: As the right hon. Gentleman says the second set of books were not copyrighted, how is it he cannot give similar information as to the first set?

MR. WALTER LONG: The hon. Member asked if they were copyrighted by Dr. Ellis, and appeared to infer that he had a proprietary interest in the books apart from the Local Government Board.

MR. MACVEAGH: I shall repeat the Question: was the first set copyrighted?

Irish Agricultural Department—Mr. Robertson's Appointment.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ouseory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state when Mr. A. H. Robert-

son was appointed agricultural inspector to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction; and what duties have been assigned to him since his appointment to this position.

MR. WALTER LONG: Mr. Robertson was appointed in April last. His duties include inspection, supervision, and furnishing reports in connection with the Department's agricultural schemes.

Bigamy in Ireland.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many cases of bigamy were reported to the Irish police during the past year; and how many of these cases were in Ulster.

MR. WALTER LONG: Six cases, of which five were in Ulster.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I do not know what inference is intended to be drawn from this Question, but may I ask how many of the bigamists were Roman Catholics?

[No Answer was returned.]

Robberies in Ireland.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many cases of robbery came to the knowledge of the Irish police last year; how many of these were in Ulster, and how many of these in the city of Belfast.

MR. WALTER LONG: There were eighty-one cases of robbery and assaults with intent to rob. Of these, forty-one were in Ulster, and of the latter thirty-four were in Belfast.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: There are some facts for Lord Londonderry's next speech.

Concealment of Birth in Ireland.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many cases of concealment of birth were reported to the authorities in Ireland during the past twelve months; what percentage of these were in the province of Ulster, and what percentage in the city of Belfast.

MR. WALTER LONG: During the year 1904 there were forty-one cases, of which seventeen were in Ulster, including Belfast, and four in Belfast. These figures represent approximately 41 and 10 per cent. respectively.

Burglary and Housebreaking in Ireland.

MR. REDDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many cases of burglary and housebreaking were reported to the police in Ireland during the year ending April 19th; what percentage of these were in the province of Ulster, and what percentage of these in the city of Belfast.

MR. WALTER LONG: During the year 1904 there were 475 cases, of which 188 were in Ulster, including Belfast, and 127 in Belfast. These figures represent about 39 and 26 per cent. respectively.

Warden Estate, Sneem.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have come to any decision on the proposed exclusion of some townlands from the sale of the Warden Estate at Sneem; and can he state whether the evicted tenants will be reinstated before the end of the summer.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Answer to the first inquiry is in the negative. The Commissioners hope that the evicted tenants whom it is proposed to reinstate will be put into occupation before the end of the summer, but they cannot say definitely.

Bee Pest in Ireland.

MR. P. A. McHUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution recently adopted by the Leitrim County Council in regard to a Bill for the better prevention of bee pest; and what action does he propose to take in reference thereto.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir. It is considered that the facilities for the eradication of this pest which are afforded by the Department's bee-keeping scheme

will, if properly used, render it unnecessary to have recourse to further legislation.

Kilmeedy Primary Schools.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.) I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the objection on moral and on educational grounds which the manager of Kilmeedy Primary School entertains to mixed schools, the Commissioners still refuse the grant-in-aid for separate new buildings there.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir. Rule 194 of the Commissioners' Code provides that in cases of applications for building grants for adjoining boys' and girls' schools, grants for separate schools cannot be made unless there is an average attendance of at least fifty pupils in each school. The condition mentioned in the rule is not fulfilled in the case of Kilmeedy. The rule was made in the interests of education, and the Commissioners do not intend to depart from it in this case.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg further to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Minutes of the National Board of Education dealing with the application of the manager of the Kilmeedy National Schools, in the county of Limerick, for a grant-in-aid for the building of new schools there and the condition of amalgamation required by the Commissioners for the granting of same, the correspondence on the subject the Board had with the manager and the district inspector, and his reports.

MR. WALTER LONG: This case was not formally submitted to the Board, as the Commissioners had decided that grants to build separate schools for boys and girls could not be made unless each had an attendance sufficient to maintain an assistant teacher. The inspectors' reports are confidential documents, but there is no objection to furnishing the hon. Member with a copy of the correspondence between the Commissioners and the manager, and I will have it sent to him accordingly.

Comparative Crime Statistics for Ireland.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the Parliamentary Return, issued last week, on Outrages in Ireland, and to the fact that the Return shows that most of the serious crimes were committed in the province of Ulster; and whether he intends to take any steps to secure a stricter enforcement of law and order in that province.

MR. WALTER LONG: In the absence of my right hon. friend, I will answer this Question. Taking the population of the four provinces as shown by the last census, I find that the Return referred to gives the following result:—In Connaught there was one case of serious crime to every 5,725 of the population; in Munster the proportion was one to 6,185; in Leinster (excluding Dublin), one to 6,641; and in Ulster (excluding Belfast), one to 11,215. Ulster, therefore, compares most favourably with the other provinces in respect of serious crime, and there is obviously no necessity for taking any special steps to enforce the law in that province.

MR. ROCHE: Am I to infer, then, that Belfast is not in Ulster?

MR. WALTER LONG: The hon. Member is no more entitled to infer that than he is to infer that Dublin is not in Leinster. In both cases I have excluded the two great cities. If Belfast were included in Ulster, the proportion would be one in 8,330 instead of one in 11,215.

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.): How does Leinster stand if Dublin is included?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have not the figures with me.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Why does the right hon. Gentleman not leave out the city of Cork from Munster? These figures are all gerrymandered.

MR. WALTER LONG: The hon. Member has no right to make a statement of that kind. I submit to you, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, that an hon.

Member of this House has no right to accuse a Minister of producing gerrymandered figures. He has served in a Government office and knows that these figures are produced by the permanent officials and are carefully examined by the Minister who is responsible for them, and no charge of gerrymandering lies fairly and squarely against either permanent officials or Ministers.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said that what he asked was why the city of Cork, which was a city of 100,000 inhabitants, was included in the Munster return, and Belfast and Dublin were excluded from the Ulster and Leinster returns. If the right hon. Gentleman thought the word offensive he would withdraw it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The expression of the hon. Member was clearly out of order. In the first place it was not a Question but an interjection, and secondly, the word is certainly objectionable.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I have withdrawn it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Yes, I understood that. But if the hon. Member wishes for any further information, drawing the distinction which he has indicated, he can put a Question on the Paper.

MR. GORDON asked whether he understood correctly that, including Belfast in Ulster, the proportion in that province was one in something over 8,000, whereas, including Cork, in Munster the proportion was one in something over 6,000.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, Sir; Cork is included because obviously it is not excluded. The object of the Question was clearly to draw a comparison between different parts of the country. The reason for the inclusion of Cork is not, as the hon. Gentlemen opposite appeared to imagine, some underhand and dishonest reason; it is simply because I thought that by supplying the information exclusive of Belfast and Dublin I should be meeting the reasonable requirements of the House.

MR. MACVEAGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the figures he has just given differ from those contained in the Return issued to Members last week?

MR. WALTER LONG: The Question addressed to me had regard to crime. The Return dealt with outrages only.

MR. MACVEAGH: And are outrages not crime?

MR. FLAVIN: And is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Munster is the province in which ex-Sergeant Sheridan committed his offences?

[No Answer was returned.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Have any fresh arrangements been made with regard to the business of the House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): To-morrow the Third Reading of the Agricultural Rating Bill will be taken as the first order, the Government Ships Bill being put down as the second order. On Thursday the Supply taken will be the Local Government Board Vote. I shall put down to-morrow the Motion for the meeting of Committees at 2 o'clock on Ascension Day.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: When will the Aliens Bill be taken in Committee?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: On the earliest possible day.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 233.]

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) rose to move a new clause to amend Section 2 of the Finance Act, 1901, the object of which was, he said, to abolish the sugar tax as from the end of the year.

MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) on a point of order, said he had an Amendment down which preceded that of the hon. Member.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I understood that that was withdrawn on account of the discussion that took place last night. If it is not withdrawn it of course takes precedence.

MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR said he had not withdrawn it; on the contrary, he wished to move it. The new clause he had to move was in the following words. "On and after the first day of July, 1905, three-halfpence shall be substituted for threepence as the increase in the duty on stripped tobacco under Section 2, Sub-section 1, of the Finance Act, 1904." He moved it on behalf of the tobacco trade section of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, who had taken the lead in this matter throughout, and had placed themselves in communication with all the members of the trade in the United Kingdom who were interested in this particular question. They sent a memorial to, as they believed, all the firms in the trade who would be affected in any way by the duty. In all 175 firms were approached. Of these 126 signed, sixteen declined, and thirty-three made no reply. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the course of the discussion on the preceding night, pointed to the fact that there were 380 licensed manufacturers, and he seemed to infer that, therefore, the memorial could not be taken as repre-

sentative of the general view, but he would point out that those who were not approached were mainly cigar and cigarette makers in a small way, who were not really affected by these duties. He held, therefore, he was justified in claiming that the memorial was sent to all firms really affected. Now it made two alternative suggestions—one to equalise the duty at 3d., and the other to reduce the duty on strips to 1½d. The right hon. Gentleman had remarked that there was discussion in the tobacco trade on the point, and no doubt there was some difference of opinion, but at a later meeting it had been decided to put forward the proposal embodied in his Amendment as a kind of intermediate suggestion. It was thought that a duty of 1½d. would produce some revenue and admit a certain amount of strips for the relief of those branches of the trade which required strips in order to carry on their business.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer on the preceding night told them it was admitted that there should be some differentiation between leaf and strips. That, no doubt, was an arguable point. The amount was very trifling, and it was not to be denied that whatever reason there might be for proposing some differentiation between leaf and strips, threepence was an excessive figure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon on the preceding night made a valuable suggestion—namely, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should appoint a small Departmental Committee to inquire into the matter. So far as he knew, the trade would be satisfied with the appointment of a small Departmental Committee, provided that steps were taken promptly and a competent body were chosen which would receive evidence. They would be quite prepared to abide by the decision of a tribunal of that kind. The present delay was exceedingly prejudicial to the trade. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them he was quite prepared to consider the suggestion, but he suggested that it would be necessary to wait until the present stock of strips had been exhausted. But that would be too late. The strips were running out every day. There were now

only about 15,000,000 pounds unsold, and the market was in danger of being cornered, if it were not already so. Until a fresh supply of strips was allowed to enter the country there was danger of stocks appreciating in value as they diminished in quantity. The proposal to reduce the increase in the duty to 1½d. would at any rate relieve the situation and it would involve the least inconvenience to the trade. He begged to move.

Clause (Amendment of 4 Edw. VII., c. 7, s. 2, as to duty on stripped tobacco)—(*Mr. Charles McArthur*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) supported the appeal made by the hon. Member for the Exchange Division. He was in favour of some immediate steps being taken, because the manufacturers in the North of England, with whom he had been in communication on the matter, were feeling this grievance very much indeed. They were in this position, that they could not obtain more than threepence per ounce for this tobacco, and at the same time they were placed at this great disadvantage that they must make tobacco of a certain kind. They could not import the whole leaf as it would not pay them to do so.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (*Mr. Austen Chamberlain*, Worcestershire, E.): May I ask the hon. Member to tell me why they cannot import the whole leaf? On the other hand it is argued that nobody can import strips with the present duty. Simultaneously the hon. Gentleman tells me that those for whom he speaks cannot afford to import the whole leaf.

MR. BRIGG said they could not afford to pay the price for the stripped leaf. They did pay it, but they felt that they were being ruined by doing so. Very soon they would have to give up selling altogether.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not want to interrupt the hon. Member

again but I can assure him it is with a genuine desire to understand his point. I understand his argument is that they cannot afford to buy strips at 3s. 3d., but what I do not understand is why they do not import the whole leaf also, and strip it themselves?

MR. BRIGG said so far as he could learn it was mainly because they would have to import the leaf in very small quantities. Then they would have to have all the machinery necessary for stripping and they would only be able to keep that machinery going part of the time. Of course that would be more expensive. The great objection, he gathered, was that there was a difference between those who made finest twist and those who made coarse twist. The large manufacturers, he was told, had a machine by which they bruised the stalk and it thus became incorporated with the tobacco, whereas small manufacturers could not employ the stalk in any shape or form. They complained very severely, and, unless they had some relief they feared that their trade would become extinct. He urged the Chancellor of the Exchequer to do what he could to relieve the difficulty.

MR.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) said they had no desire to hurry the Chancellor of the Exchequer into a premature decision, but he was sure his right hon. friend would do his best to remedy any grievance which was felt. As the stock ran out there was danger of loss being incurred by the small manufacturers. He doubted, however, whether the clause proposed would provide a satisfactory remedy.

*MR. RITCHIE (Croydon) regretted that his hon. friend had thought it necessary to move the Amendment, as he had understood that he would be satisfied if the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave a promise that he would appoint a Committee, if he found a Committee were necessary, to inquire into the matter. This seemed to be a question eminently fitted to be referred to a small Departmental Committee. What was the position of things? It had been alleged that differentiation created a situation in which there was a considerable amount of protection which militated

very much against certain manufacturers of tobacco in this country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer on the other hand declared that he had had no desire, in putting on this tax, to introduce any element of protection, and he did not doubt that no element of protection had been intended—he meant no substantial element of protection, however. It was clear that when a tax was put upon an article which was manufactured it became necessary to put a different tax on the raw material from that which was put on the manufactured article, and it was almost impossible to adjust things so as to prevent the smallest element of protection. It had always been the custom in cases of the kind that where there was a chance of their being an element of injury to a manufacture, the small amount of protection that must be given was not considered improper. He was sure his right hon. friend, when he imposed this tax, had no idea of introducing any contentious element of protection; but it was now contended that there was a very large element of protection in this tax, and he rather gathered from what his right hon. friend had said that he was inclined to consider that the position was not a satisfactory one. If that were so what could be better than to ask some independent tribunal to deal with the matter? Of course his right hon. friend, having regard to the discussion yesterday, might of his own motion propose some Amendment which would render such a Committee unnecessary, and he could not help thinking that that was probably in his right hon. friend's mind when he did not give that unqualified promise of a Committee which some of his friends desired. He was afraid that his right hon. friend must recognise that he was somewhat in the position of a suspect in this matter; but he would be quite satisfied if he would of his own motion make some fair proposal, or, if he could not do that, would say at once that he would appoint a Committee.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer must recognise that the promise he made on the previous night to appoint a Committee at the expiration of some undeterminate period could not

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

possibly be accepted by the supporters of the Amendment. He certainly did not regret that it had been moved. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon was quite mistaken in thinking that the objection to this duty was based entirely on its protective element. It was objected to from the business point of view. His right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer had needlessly disturbed a trade in America—he did not know whether that was intended as the beginning of a retaliatory policy towards America, but if it were it was a very weak beginning. Again, he had needlessly disturbed a great trade in this country which he was warned he was doing when he put on the differential duty. He paid no heed to that warning at the time, but a year's experience had fully justified it. Then the right hon. Gentleman had protected, or apparently protected, a trade in England which refused to allow itself to be galvanised into existence. The mistake that had been made was the anticipation that strip would continue to be imported. The average import for the four years previous to the imposition of the duty was 50,000 casks. Since this differential duty was imposed the import had shrunk to about 10,000 casks, or one-fifth of the average of the preceding four years, to the detriment of the small manufacturers who were dependent on these imported strips. He thought that was damning proof that so far from laying the ground for raising the revenue the right hon. Gentleman had laid the ground for destroying an important industry which he had not succeeded in transferring to this country. If his right hon. friend was prepared to promise a Committee, those interested in the matter were so satisfied with the evidence they could lay before it that such a proposal could probably be accepted. They believed that the evidence they could place before a Committee was of so overwhelming a character as to ensure a verdict which would result in the right hon. Gentleman reverting to the position foreshadowed in the Amendment. But the dim and distant suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman that a Committee should be appointed either by himself or his successor when the existing stocks of strips were

exhausted was not one that could be reasonably expected to be accepted as a substantial contribution to the settlement of a vexed question.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.) said he had been approached by gentlemen interested in the trade, and they had not objected to this duty on the ground of its protective character. They did not concern themselves with the fiscal dispute. They only considered the matter as it affected their trade. When it was first put on they formed a rough estimate that 2d. should be about the difference, but experience had enabled them to come to the conclusion that a duty of 1½d. would place the two classes of tobacco on an even footing, and they were confident that they could establish that before an independent body of experts. These gentlemen, he was sure, would be satisfied with an inquiry, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would grant it. He saw no objection to the tax if it incidentally protected the trade, that not being its purpose. If the tax had originally been imposed as a protective duty he for one would have opposed it, because that would have been contrary to the undertaking given by the Prime Minister that nothing in the nature of protection should be introduced during the life of the present Parliament. But that was not the reason for imposing it. The real idea—which, however, had not been realised—was to create more work in the country, and the tax certainly appeared to him to be reasonable in itself. He had, however, had representations made to him that the duty of 3d. was too much, and he thought this was a question which might be referred to a Committee of inquiry for definite settlement. At any rate, it was not reasonable to ask the right hon. Gentleman to upset his entire Budget scheme by assenting to the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside) joined in the appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for an inquiry into the amount of the duty. He did not think it had been made out that the duty was protective. He had always understood it to be a canon of fiscal

doctrine that protective duties were borne by the consumer, and in the whole course of that debate he had not heard it suggested that this particular duty was borne by the consumer. On the contrary, it was claimed that it was the tobacco producer who was the sufferer. He was convinced that it was not the wish of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that it should do more than redress an inequality in the incidence of the tax—that it should make matters right as between the different kinds of tobacco. Personally he would not be sorry to see the Excise duties on tobacco done away with altogether. Mr. Mitchell Henry, in a very interesting work, had described how formerly a rough kind of tobacco plant was grown in Ireland and the people were able to smoke it to their own satisfaction and advantage, but the Irish tobacco industry was stamped out absolutely by the Excise duties and a very real wrong was thereby done to the people of Ireland.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): I rise to order. Is the hon. Member entitled to discuss the question of Irish tobacco?

MR. J. F. HOPE said it had been alleged that this was a protective tax and in dealing with that argument he had only incidentally referred to the fact that the tobacco was formerly grown in Ireland.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. Member that the growth of Irish tobacco does not seem to have much to do with the Amendment.

MR. J. F. HOPE said he only desired to say that those who accused the Chancellor of the Exchequer of having desired to introduce protection by imposing this duty did small justice to his ordinary intelligence. He was glad the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had repudiated the idea. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was incapable of adopting such a course, which would have been not only dishonest, but extremely foolish from his own point of view.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he regretted that the subject should

Mr. J. F. Hope.

have been reopened. He had understood that the discussion on the previous night had been deemed sufficient by his hon. friend, and he thought that was the understanding on both sides of the House. He did not desire to delay the Committee by rearguing the whole question, which he had dealt with last night. If he had thought that this was a purely protective measure, even if he had had a wish to do so, he would have considered himself precluded from proposing it last year; but it was proposed simply for revenue purposes, and as such he had commended it to the House. There had been much discussion as to the exact measure of differentiation, and the hon. Member for Liverpool seemed to think that there should be no differentiation at all; but either he did not speak the mind of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce or opinion had greatly changed upon that body, for they had expressed approval of his proposals provided that consideration was given to stocks already imported. A concession was made in that direction last year, and, of course, to extend that to all strips would put an end to that special concession. He could not say, of course, how the stocks had been disposed of; he could only say what remained in bond at a given date. He had always admitted the difficulties and complications in the way of arriving at a proper differentiation, and he thought that gentlemen interested in one particular kind of tobacco were apt to overlook other varieties. He had taken what appeared to be a fair average, and could not admit that a provision intended to secure a reasonable amount of revenue amounted to prohibition of importation. It was clear, however, that it was a matter to be carefully watched.

He had no insuperable objection to a Departmental Committee of inquiry; but what he had in mind was the possibility that, with all the facts before him, he might come to the conclusion that a modification such as was suggested might be desirable, and then a Committee would be unnecessary. At the time he made the concession alluded to hon. Gentlemen said it would give rise to a certain amount of uncertainty, which would be a great disadvantage, and that was quite true. He would

gladly have left the duty as it was, and he was not at all sure that that would not have been the best course. The conditional promise, however, held good. When directly challenged, he had said he made his proposals for a permanent duty to avoid uncertainty in the trade; but if those who represented the trade pressed to have the subject reopened the responsibility for creating uncertainty must be with them. In the face of statements he had made it would be impossible to assent to the change at the present time, because on the faith of those statements business arrangements had been carried on. Therefore it would be a breach of faith on his part to make such a change, because those engaged in the trade might fairly say that they had been misled by the statement he made last year, and they could fairly argue that had they understood that the matter was open to revision this year they would have made other arrangements. He was not alone in that opinion. He observed in many quarters, both amongst traders and from the reports of company meetings in trade journals, that there was a certain sense of relief when the Budget statement was announced and it was seen that the tobacco duty had not been altered. The mere rumour that he might modify his proposals in regard to tobacco had disturbed the trade, and all they wanted was that he should leave tobacco alone. A good deal had been said about the position of small manufacturers, yet he was not able to understand the difficulties supposed to afflict them. But it was a highly technical matter, and he would be ready to consider their case when presented to him. He thought himself that the disturbance of the trade was much more due to trade combinations than to the operations of proposals made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer was hardly entitled to animadvert upon the action of the hon. Member for the Exchange Division of Liverpool in bringing this matter forward that day, as there was no pledge or understanding that the question should not be again discussed. If the right hon. Gentleman had desired to

animadvert upon anybody, he might have done so upon certain Members on his own side who, as usual, got up, not to discuss the question on its merits, but merely to consume time.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN pointed out that it would have been somewhat unusual if he had got up to reply at once, as several hon. Members on either side were rising to criticise his action. He did not know whether the rule as to a Minister's replying immediately he was challenged was to apply to every debate.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said it was obvious to every Member who heard them that some of the speeches were not delivered for the purpose of throwing any light on the question. The point of the present discussion was whether there should be a Committee of inquiry, and whether the right hon. Gentleman should at once make the concession for which the hon. Member for the Exchange Division asked. Personally he agreed with the view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had to continue or rescind this tax on his own responsibility. Nothing could be worse from the point of view of the trade than the uncertainty which would be engendered by the appointment of a Committee, and the expectations of an alteration to which it would give rise. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to have forgotten that it was the doubts which he himself threw on his own tax which led to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon. All the figures given in the debate had gone to show that the duty, although not imposed for protective purposes, had had protective results, and that the right hon. Gentleman, in endeavouring to remove an anomaly, had imposed a tax which had been extremely detrimental to some portions of the trade and very beneficial to others. The effect upon the trade was the greatest condemnation of the tax as originally proposed and now levied. But for the gift of nearly a quarter of a million of money to certain privileged merchants, the paralysing effect of the tax upon the branch of the trade particularly concerned would have been

even more complete ; and now the granting of that money was made a reason for not putting the tax on a fair basis because it would damnify those privileged persons. That was surely an object-lesson in regard to taxes imposed not purely for revenue purposes but with some ulterior object in view.

But what was the actual financial position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the matter ? Nobody had suggested that sales would be stopped if by the grant of £200,000 or £250,000 strips were enabled to come into the market, or that in the first year and possibly the second the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not obtain a substantial revenue from the tax. But from the very beginning the amount received had been far smaller than it would have been from a general tax on the trade. The mere fact of proposing the tax for other than revenue purposes had meant the loss of one-third of the revenue that would otherwise have been derived, and the net result of the tax was a sum of £400,000. But what were likely to be the receipts from the tax during the present and particularly future years ? The figures as to the imports of strips were remarkable, showing as they did a fall since the imposition of the tax from an average for the first quarter of the year of 15,000 casks to 2,000, most of which was to be used for export purposes and therefore would not come in for taxation at all. Unless strips came in there would be no revenue, and the Committee ought to know on what the right hon. Gentleman based his sanguine estimate that the revenue would keep up to its present level. On the whole he was glad the tax was imposed last year, because, while not affecting any really large or serious interest, it afforded an object-lesson of the results of using taxation for other than purely revenue purposes. The more successful a protective duty was, the less revenue it would bring in. There were two Questions he desired to ask. The first was : Could the right hon. Gentleman give any figures showing that the tax had led to increased employment at home ? The other was : Could he disprove the statement that the amount of stalk taken for drawback was smaller than before the tax ? Unless the right hon. Gentle-

man could prove that the amount was not smaller, it meant that the stalk was going into consumption and therefore that the quality of tobacco had deteriorated as the result of this tax. He had hoped that after his experience in this matter the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have come down and, admitting that he had made a mistake, express his willingness to abolish the tax instead of saying that he would reconsider it on some future occasion.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said his sympathies were largely with the hon. Member for Liverpool who had moved this new clause. He did not think it was the business of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give privileges either to classes or to strips, for that was protection. Where were they now ? The hon. Member for Liverpool had proposed a clause which would come into operation immediately and would put tobacco upon a proper basis in the present year. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had replied that he was prepared to consider favourably the appointment of a Departmental Committee, but there was not much in that. He also said that there was no insuperable objection to this course. Of course there was not. Whether such a Committee was or was not appointed, he saw no approach towards the acceptance of the proposal now before the Committee. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he might reconsider this question and that he might come to the conclusion that the change proposed by the hon. Member for Liverpool was necessary. They wished to know, if he did come to that conclusion, would he make the change this year or next year ? Whenever he heard a Minister suggest a Royal Commission or a Committee he knew the idea was to shelve the question. A Committee was not required in order to ascertain the merits or demerits of this proposal. The mover of this clause had received no concession whatever, and whatever alteration was made in the tobacco duty would certainly not be made before next year. He did not know how the mover of this Amendment felt in regard to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer,

Mr. Sydney Buxton.

and, if he were in his position, as no concession had been made he would go to a division.

*MR. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster) said that the policy which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was pursuing was distinctly favourable to the large tobacco trusts. It was practically impossible in the small establishments for the whole leaf tobacco to be used, as they had been accustomed for many years to using strips. The reason was that the manipulation of the stems of the tobacco became much more difficult because of the larger percentage of moisture which they absorbed in manufacture. All were anxious that the conditions of the law should be carefully maintained, the manufacturers, however, were liable to find themselves with results of excessive moisture in the production of their manufactured tobacco. He considered it was undesirable that the smaller manufacturers should find themselves liable to be charged with unscrupulous dealing because of the difficulty of maintaining the standard of moisture specified by the law. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer persisted in maintaining the threepence in the pound they would be mulcted in a very serious loss. The small manufacturers who produced one class of manufactured tobacco had not the power to use the balance of the stems taken from their purchase of whole leaf, and therefore he urged the Government to meet the interests of a large number of traders who had conducted a respectable business in the past and whose business now would practically be ruined. The difference between threepence and three-halfpence—which was the proposal before the House—was sufficient to ruin a very large number of people. If the right hon. Gentleman persisted in his policy he was informed that it would be followed by a large number of failures. The margin of profit was so small that it would not allow the difference, and the conditions were full of anxiety for a large number of respectable traders whose interests he wished to support.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that they had dismissed the whole substance of this question the previous night, and they separated at any rate,

with the general understanding that they were going to discuss sugar the first thing that day, and he was then encouraged by the general approval of Members present to hope that they might finish the Budget before dinner. He appealed to the House to come to a decision upon this question as rapidly as possible.

MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR said that, after the assurance given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he begged leave to withdraw his Amendment. [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no!"]

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said that Scotch tobacco importers felt themselves precluded from approaching the right hon. Gentleman on this subject, because he gave them last year a rebate on existing stocks, and while they objected to his present proposals they felt in honour bound not to approach him again so soon. Anyone who had listened to the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not help feeling that he had not justified the continuance of this duty at 3d. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the only thing which prevented him from correcting what was demanded now was the fact that he gave a pledge last year that it should not be interfered with. Would he do any harm to anyone if he reduced the duty? On the contrary, he would benefit the tobacco trade and the Exchequer as well, because if this duty was continued there would practically be no revenue. By reducing it to 1½d. there was a chance of some revenue accruing. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had not attempted to justify the 3d. duty. It had been clearly proved that it came to not more than ½d. a lb., but, adding interest, 1d. was the utmost really that had been estimated as the cost of stripping. If that was so, the 3d. duty must be a protective duty to the extent of 2d. per lb. He was quite willing to give the Chancellor of the Exchequer credit for having no idea of protection in his mind when he introduced the tobacco duty, just as a predecessor, when he introduced the corn tax, had no conception of the ramifications that would ensue. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol was convinced that it was protective, and he

thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer would find himself in the same position to-day. He would give satisfaction to the House, the tobacco importers, and the country, if he were to do what was asked for in this Amendment. The hon. Member felt in honour bound to support the Amendment. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would face the facts and accept the Amendment, for he had conceded both in his speech last night and his speech that day that this was an excessive duty.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick) said several representations had been made to him by Irish manufacturers in regard to this tax. Some of the largest manufacturers of tobacco in the United Kingdom were fortunately living in Ireland. This was a much more serious matter than the Chancellor of the Exchequer apparently recognised, because it meant the extinction of the small manufacturers altogether. He could not understand the attitude of the hon. Member for the Exchange Division in this matter. If he were in earnest in bringing forward the Amendment he ought to go to a division in order to test the opinion of the House upon the urgency of the question which he had promised to champion. The hon. Member should not be satisfied with the explanation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for it simply amounted to a statement that he would probably consider the question at a suitable time. If the right hon. Gentleman failed to come to a decision he would appoint a Departmental Committee, which meant that the question would probably be shelved for ever. He had promised to his constituents to take action in this matter and he meant to carry out his promise. There was no doubt that if this duty was retained they would only play into the hands of the trusts.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made any promise which had any substance in it he should have been desirous to see the Amendment withdrawn. As a matter of fact, the right hon. Gentleman had given them nothing. He had told them that he would at

some unknown date appoint a Committee in order to consider the whole subject. That was not a sufficient promise to induce the hon. Member for the Exchange Division to abandon the course he had taken up on behalf of the tobacco trade. He appealed to the hon. Member not to withdraw the Amendment. A protest ought to be made on behalf of the tobacco trade to show that this tax, originally unfair, was still unfair, although some small concessions had been made. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said this was a revenue tax, and pointed to the £400,000 he had obtained from it. That revenue had been obtained exclusively from the holders of the existing stocks of strips. They held a commodity which entered into free and open competition with leaf tobacco which was not subjected to the extra duty of 3d. The holders of strips were bound to pay this duty. This was because it was said the public would pay them a higher price for strips than for leaf. Before this tax was introduced the price of the ordinary quality of leaf tobacco might be said to be 6d. per lb., and the same quality of strips would have stood at 7½ per lb. These were the prices before the duty was paid in bond. They were sold out of bond at 3s. 6d. and 3s. 7½d. per lb. respectively. Now the Chancellor of the Exchequer came down to the House and said the trade were all wrong when they declared that strips were only worth 3s. 7½d. as against 3s. 6d. for leaf tobacco; the true fact was that strips were worth, not 1½d. but 4½d. more. The Chancellor of the Exchequer made the discovery that the merchants and manufacturers who were dealing in strips were all wrong in regard to the prices of the two articles. They thought that there was only 1½d. of difference in value due to the actual cost of stripping, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the difference in price ought to be 1½d. plus 3d., because the price of stripped, owing to people having to pay 3d. to take it out of bond, would be 3s. 10½d.

The right hon. Gentleman informed the House last year that all his calculations were really for more smokable tobacco than leaf, and that the trade had been

all wrong. The trade had had the advantage for a year of the ripe experience of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and still in the estimation of the trade leaf and stripped had only $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. difference in value. This $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. duty had to be found by the owners of the strips out of their own pockets. For immediate and actual purposes this duty would have no effect on the tobacco trade. There were no strips at present imported and taken from the Custom House at 3s. 3d. per lb. except in a few cases of a very special kind of tobacco, the quantity of which was very insignificant. For all commercial purposes the only strips which were now taken out of bond were those on which only $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. was payable. Those who objected to this tax in the form proposed, asked that the law should be that strips hereafter imported should pay $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. Before this change of the law was made last year the practice was to accumulate strips in bond in large quantities. Last year there were 110,000,000 lbs. of strips in bond. That supply was sufficient to last two years. All the strips brought into the country now would have to be kept in bond as the old strips were, for they had to mature in bond. All that the Committee would do by passing the Amendment would be to inform the tobacco trade what the duty payable months hence would be. If that duty was reduced to $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. it would enable stocks of strips to grow up and the duty would be got not this year, but the year after. If the present system were continued the growth of the stock of strips would be precluded, because strips had to be kept in bond before passing through the Custom-house in order to mature. The only chance of getting revenue from strips was to induce tobacco merchants to buy strips, keep them in bond, and release them on payment of $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb.

The Committee should remember that although this was, in its total amount, an insignificant tax, the individuals affected by it, although few in number, were very seriously affected. It was no compensation to any man who was being deprived of every prospect of employment to tell him that this trade was a small trade, and that the great interests of the nation were not affected

by it. If this tax was an unjust tax no individual should be allowed to suffer from it. At the beginning of last year, before the tax was imposed, the stocks of strips amounted to 110,000,000 lbs.; there was a great trade in strips; firms imported them; firms dealt in them, and now all that business was gone. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was only getting revenue from the strips which were in bond. If this Amendment were adopted these men would be enabled to do a limited business in strips again. Why should not the Chancellor of the Exchequer recognise that he had made a mistake? The right hon. Gentleman had not made out the merits of the case in behalf of this tax. He appealed to hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House who supported free trade to remember the language used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer when this tax was originally introduced. It was introduced as a protective tax, though it was true that that notion was afterwards abandoned when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was reminded of the pledges given that protection was not to be introduced during the present Parliament. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking of what Mr. Gladstone had done in 1863, said—

“There is no doubt what was Mr. Gladstone's object at that time. He intended to throw open the tobacco trade to foreign competition, as other trades had then recently been thrown open; and he explained that he allowed the difference between the rates on manufactured and on raw tobacco as a full and fair equivalent for all charges—both the direct and the indirect charges—to which the British manufacturer was subject, and ‘in order that the labourers who were employed in the manufacture, amongst whom were women and children, might be well looked after.’ What has been the result? In the first place, I think it is demonstrable that there was an error in the calculations on which Mr. Gladstone worked. He himself, indeed, subsequently corrected the error, but he did not alter the rates which he had proposed, and the result is that the home manufacturer making for home consumption has a larger measure of—shall I say compensation?—than Mr. Gladstone intended.”

“Compensation” was the Chancellor of the Exchequer's word for protection; and he showed, with perfect truth, that the existing rates did give protection to the home manufacturer. The Chancellor of the Exchequer went on to say—

“It is clear that the stripped leaf has a definite and distinct value differing from that

which the whole leaf enjoys. It is not right that this separate value, this process of manufacture which the leaf has undergone, should not, like all other processes of manufacture which add to the value, be marked on our scale and find its reflection in the appropriate way."

The "appropriate way" was, of course, that it was to receive compensation in the same way as other processes of manufacture, and that was by protection. His objections to this tax were that it had

failed in its purpose, it was unjust in its incidence, and it was bringing in no revenue; and on all these grounds he heartily supported the Amendment of the hon. Member for Liverpool.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 158; Noes, 221. (Division List No. 186.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
 Abraham, William (Rhondda)
 Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Allen, Charles P.
 Ambrose, Robert
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
 Atherley-Jones, L.
 Austin, Sir John
 Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
 Bell, Richard
 Blake, Edward
 Boland, John
 Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
 Brigg, John
 Bright, Allan Heywood
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burke, E. Haviland
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Robert
 Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Churchill, Winston Spencer
 Clancy, John Joseph
 Crombie, John William
 Delany, William
 Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
 Dillon, John
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Dunn, Sir William
 Edwards, Frank
 Elibank, Master of
 Ellice, Capt EC (S. Andrw's Bghs)
 Esmonde, Sir Thomas
 Fenwick, Charles
 Field, William
 Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE)
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Furness, Sir Christopher
 Gilhooly, James
 Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
 Goddard, Daniel Ford

Grant, Corrie
 Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
 Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
 Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
 Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
 Hammond, John
 Harcourt, Lewis
 Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
 Harwood, George
 Hayden, John Patrick
 Helme, Norval Watson
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
 Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
 Holland, Sir William Henry
 Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnson, John
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
 Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
 Joyce, Michael
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
 Kilbride, Denis
 Kitson, Sir James
 Lamont, Norman
 Langley, Batty
 Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
 Levy, Maurice
 Lough, Thomas
 London, W.
 Lyell, Charles Henry
 MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 McCrae, George
 Mansfield, Horace Rendall
 Mooney, John J.
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murphy, John
 Nannetti, Joseph P.
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow W.)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Dowd, John
 O'Malley, William
 O'Shaughnessy, P. J.

Parrott, William
 Partington, Oswald
 Paulton, James Mellor
 Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
 Perks, Robert William
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Price, Robert John
 Rea, Russell
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Richards, Thomas (WMonm'th)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Roche, John
 Runciman, Walter
 Russell, T. W.
 Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
 Shackleton, David James
 Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Soares, Ernest J.
 Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R. (Northants)
 Sullivan, Donal
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
 Thomas JA (Glamorgan, Gower)
 Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
 Tomkinson, James
 Toulmin, George
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Ure, Alexander
 Villiers, Ernest Amherst
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
 Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
 White, George (Norfolk)
 Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
 Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset)
 Wilson, Fred. W. (Norfolk, Mid.)
 Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Woodhouse, Sir JT (Hudders'd)
 Young, Samuel
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. McKenna and Mr. Dalziel.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
 Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
 Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Arrol, Sir William
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
 Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitzroy
 Bailey, James (Waltham)
 Bain, Colonel James Robert
 Baird, John George Alexander
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
 Banbury, Sir Frederick George
 Banner, John S. Harwood-
 Bignold, Sir Arthur
 Bill, Charles
 Bingham, Lord
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bousfield, William Robert
 Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex)
 Brassey, Albert
 Brodric, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brotherton, Edward Allen
 Brymer, William Ernest
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.)
 Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Worc.)
 Chapman, Edward
 Clive, Captain Percy A.
 Cochran, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C. R.
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Denny, Colonel
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
 Doughty, Sir George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Faber, Edmund B. (Hants., W.)
 Faber, George Denison (York)
 Fellowes, Rt. Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manch.)
 Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
 Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
 Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'n'n's B'ghs)
 Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
 Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
 Flower, Sir Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.)
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gardner, Ernest

Garfit, William
 Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
 Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
 Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
 Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
 Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
 Grenfell, William Henry
 Gretton, John
 Gunter, Sir Robert
 Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G. (Midd'x)
 Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'n'derry)
 Hardy Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
 Hay, Hon. Claude George
 Helder, Augustus
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hoare, Sir Samuel
 Hobhouse, Rt. Hon. H. (Somerset, E.)
 Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Hault, Joseph
 Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hunt, Rowland
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
 Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
 Kerr, John
 Kimber, Sir Henry
 Knowles, Sir Lees
 Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R.)
 Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham)
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Bristol, S.)
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Maconochie, A. W.
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W.)
 M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
 Majendie, James A. H.
 Malcolm, Ian
 Manners, Lord Cecil
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n)
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Middlemore, John Throgmorton
 Milmay, Francis Bingham
 Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
 Milvain, Thomas
 Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy

Morpeth, Viscount
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Almyer
 Mount, William Arthur
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Myers, William Henry
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
 Ractliff, R. F.
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Remnant, James Farquharson
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Renwick, George
 Ridley, S. Forde
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
 Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
 Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
 Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Sloan, Thomas Henry
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
 Smith, Rt. Hon. J. Parker (Lanarks)
 Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
 Stock, James Henry
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Thornburn, Sir Walter
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Tuff, Charles
 Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (Sheffield)
 Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)

Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E.R. (Bath)

Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
Alexander Acland-Hood and
Viscount Valentia.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said he desired to move the abolition of the sugar tax which was imposed in the Finance Act, Section 2, of 1901. He would once more ask the Committee to reconsider this question for three reasons, first, that the tax was a war tax imposed for war purposes on the entire community, and it was, moreover, a war tax needlessly and wrongly maintained in time of peace. Second, it was a tax on food which fell with undue weight, almost in geometrical progression, on the poorest of the poor, the poorest household contributing the largest proportion to the national expenditure as compared with the middle and higher classes. The tax involved a contribution from the agricultural labourer of thirteen times as much as a man with an income of £1,500 a year; twenty times as much as a man with £3,600 a year, and eighty times as much as a man with £20,000 a year. He had given these figures in detail last year and only reverted to these calculations now to show that the tax operated on a disproportionate scale. Thirdly, this tax fell not only on food, but on raw material. It fell on some of the growing industries of the country, which ought to be encouraged instead of discouraged. All the objections he had mentioned were aggravated and intensified by the Brussels Convention, which was almost unanimously condemned by his hon. friends, and under which this country handed over to a foreign Junta the power to dictate where it should obtain its sugar supplies. The tax was essentially in its nature and origin a war tax. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, in moving the tax in 1901, said that he wished, for the purposes of the war, a tax on some article of universal consumption, by which everybody should pay something. He said—

“I want a tax which shall not be open to the objections to which a protective duty on an article produced in this country would certainly be open, namely, that it would raise the price of the whole amount of that article to the consumers by a far larger sum than the yield of the tax accruing to the Exchequer.”

No wise or prudent man would deny that to meet a great national emergency there might be conceivable justification for imposing a tax on an article of universal consumption. But the right hon. Gentleman went on to expressly justify the tax on the ground that it probably would not increase the price to the consumer because of the operation of the bounties. If that were so the enormous enhancement of prices which had resulted from the operation of the Convention, and so had enforced upon the consumers heavy outgoings far beyond the actual contribution to the revenue, logically imposed upon the Government the duty of reconsidering the tax now, if only because of the reasons alleged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol.

Then the tax was a severe burden upon the poor. In the recent Blue-book, which gave 1,944 family budgets of various classes of artisans, it appeared that the duties on sugar and tea together represented an income-tax of nearly 5d. in the £ on incomes of 21s. per week, 3½d. on incomes of 31s., and nearly 3d. on the highest incomes given—52s. When it was remembered that these people also contributed heavily through other duties, it could not be denied that the sugar duty was an exceedingly severe burden upon the poor.

Then there was the question of the effect of the tax upon trade. Last year, when he moved the abolition of the tax, he was furnished with figures showing the disastrous effect upon many industries which were largely dependent on sugar as a raw material. There was widespread ruin and loss of employment. There was no doubt that the subsequent immense rise in prices had intensified their difficulties, and that their position during the past winter had been in the highest degree critical. A slight fall in prices had somewhat relieved the pressure, but the general effect remained much about the same. The industries which depended on cheap sugar as a raw material had been stunted,

paralysed, and thrown back. According to the Returns of last month, the diminution of exports of refined sugar and candy was very considerable. For the month ended April 30th, in the three years 1903, 1904, and 1905, the quantities in cwts. were 53,670, 49,166, and 36,074, respectively. Seeing that these industries were started and pushed forward by free access to cheap sugar, no business man could regard such figures as those with complacency. Taking the first four months in each of the years named, the fall in the exports of refined sugar and candy was from 216,223 cwts. in 1903 to 180,918 cwts. in 1904, and 130,328 cwts. in 1905. Such facts could not be ignored. The fall had been continuous, and it carried its own story with it. The increase in the imports from abroad, though great in quantities, had been still greater in value, while the value of the exports, even at the higher prices, was stationary, if not lower, than three years ago. He submitted that the tax was unjust to these great industries, and imposed upon them an intolerable disability and disadvantage. Possibly some slight advantage had been contributed to the sugar planters of the West Indies, but the economic difficulties of the West Indies were more likely to be met by the intelligent adaptation of land and capital to new industries as had been shown by the hon. member for Buteshire a few days before, than by the bolstering up by artificial means of the sugar-cane industry. On the three grounds that the tax was inconsistent with the pledges and principles on which it was originally imposed, that it involved an unjust contribution from the poorest of the poor, and that it imposed serious disabilities and loss upon many industries in this country, he urged that there should be a reconsideration of the whole question. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not abandon the tax at once, he hoped he would intimate that it was not a tax upon which the Government would in future rely. He begged to move.

Clause (Abolition of sugar duty)—

Mr. Channing)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he would deal with the hon. Member's objections to the tax *seriatim*. In contending that it was a war tax and that the war being over it should no longer be maintained the hon. Member had not kept fully in mind the statement repeatedly made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, to the effect that the difficulty which faced him as Finance Minister was not so much that of financing the war, onerous as that task was, as that of providing a sufficient revenue for the peace expenditure of the country. It was true that when the tax was first imposed his right hon. friend expressed the hope that early relief might be given, but subsequently in making further proposals he explained that he had to provide not merely for the war but for the maintenance of the ordinary financial equilibrium after the war had ended. Therefore it was a complete misapprehension to suppose that this tax was imposed or should be regarded solely as a war tax. It was imposed in the first instance to meet war expenditure, but it was intended after the war had concluded to be one of the country's financial resources.

It was no doubt true that the tax fell more heavily in proportion on the poor man than upon the rich. The expenditure of a poor man upon a certain article would bear a larger proportion to his income than would be the case with a rich man. That would be a just and conclusive criticism if this were the only tax on which the Exchequer relied for its revenue, but, as he had often pointed out, the equity of a tax could not be judged upon one isolated item separated from all other taxes. The balance was redressed by taxes imposed solely on the wealthier classes, such as income-tax, death duties, and the like, besides those other taxes which, for reasons known to everybody, were put on articles of luxury used by the rich that they also might contribute fairly to the revenue.

In the main the sugar duty was not a tax upon raw material, but

upon food, but even as a tax on raw material it did not stand alone. Cocoa beans and tobacco were raw materials subject to taxation, and he might find other instances. Hon. Gentlemen opposite returned to the argument repeated from time to time that all the objections to the tax were aggravated by the Brussels Convention. More than a slight reference to the Brussels Convention would be out of order. He had defended the policy of that Convention in reply to a deputation, and upon a fitting occasion would be ready to justify the action of the Government. It was, no doubt, perfectly true that certain industries had been encouraged and fostered by the abnormally low price of sugar in the past, but that was not a natural price at which sugar could remain in any circumstances for any length of time, or a price that could be attained except by artificial means; and it was surprising that the hon. Member, with his strict economic views, should desire that an industry should exist on an artificial basis when it could not subsist under fair terms of trade competition.

The effect of the Brussels Convention had been to withdraw an artificial stimulus from particular industries obtained at the expense of another industry equally deserving and which left the favoured industries on a footing of insecurity not beneficial to trade generally. No doubt the rise in the price of sugar last year, due largely to circumstances wholly unconnected with the Convention, was detrimental to the trade. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that violent fluctuations of this kind in the sugar trade were unknown before the Convention. On the contrary, the most violent fluctuations had taken place in the price of sugar from time to time before either the Sugar Convention or the tax existed, and the liability to such fluctuations was increased when the market was dependent upon a single source of supply or upon one area of production. The best defence against such sudden fluctuations was to secure that other sugar which was being driven out of the market by artificial competition should be able to compete on fair terms, and to provide that we should have a wider area of

production from which to draw supplies, and that we should not be dependent on the climatic conditions of a particular part of the world, or any combination which could be formed among the producers for a single and limited market.

The inconvenience caused by the rise was great, but it had been exaggerated. Failures in the confectionery and mineral water trades had not been substantially larger than in other years; and the Returns supplied by the Board of Trade seemed to show that the alteration in price since the Convention came into force had not been such as to prevent the making of very good profits. He did not dispute that the great and sudden rise due to shortage of crop had been highly injurious to trade, but prospects for the future were brighter. The price at the beginning of January was 14s. 10d., and increased by the middle of that month to 16s. But by May 18th it had fallen to 11s., and the price quoted on that date for deliveries in the following November was 9s. 11d. The average of the ten years 1892-1901 was 10s. 9d.; a higher price than that quoted for delivery in November next. He did not understand why the fact that they had a tax on sugar consumed at home should affect the export of confectionery and other manufactured articles which obtained a drawback. As a matter of fact, the figures he had before him did not bear out the suggestion made. The import figures included as confectionery a good deal not generally recognised as such, and, so far as the exports were concerned, which were much more nearly true confectionery, the decrease was very slight indeed; nor would the figures, even though less favourable, afford a conclusive reason for abandoning permanently so important a source of revenue.

The tax produced very nearly £6,000,000 of revenue last year, and he did not know where he could look to recoup to the Treasury the sum which would be lost by the abandonment of the tax. It was quite obvious that he could not agree to part with it in the current year, and neither did he feel inclined to pledge himself to its abandonment at a future time. If it were true, as he believed, that one source of our indirect taxation

on which we had so largely relied in the past—namely, the tax on alcoholic drinks—was going to produce less to the revenue in proportion than in former years, that was a reason the more for finding other sources of indirect taxation which might go some way to meet the difficulty. It was often said the tax on beer, spirits, and tobacco need be contributed to by no man unless he pleased. It was perfectly true, no doubt, that a man could get out of paying these taxes if he did not drink and refrained from smoking, but we must have some taxation which citizens could not decline to contribute to by simply changing their habits or altering their form of expenditure. The sugar tax was one to which everyone contributed, and, taken in conjunction with the rest of our system of taxation, he did not think it imposed an undue burden upon any section of the population. He could give no pledge that he would make it his business to secure a withdrawal of the tax.

* MR. EDWARDS (Radnor) said he desired to say a few words in support of the new clause moved by the hon. Member for Northamptonshire. He need not go into all the figures to show that this tax was a great burden on the poor, and on certain industries of this country. That fact was only too well known. He was very disappointed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not at the present moment give any hopes of the withdrawal of this tax. He had hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would have held out some prospect, if not then, of its withdrawal or diminution in the near future. The Chancellor had said that he had as far as he could redressed the balance by putting on the shoulders of the richer classes a heavier burden of taxation, but, at the same time, as they all knew, the burden of taxation was heavier on the shoulders of the poor than upon the rich. Speaking generally, the very poor paid double the amount paid by the income-tax payer towards the general taxation of the country. He could not help regretting also that the Chancellor had not given some redress to those manufacturers who were such heavy sufferers from the burden put on the sugar industry, and when they saw that this Government had been careful to help

industries in other countries by allowing them to get cheap labour, it really did seem hard that they should burden industries in this country by keeping a tax upon them it was very difficult to bear. He saw the Chancellor of the Exchequer had followed his great predecessor, Sir Stafford Northcote, in the matter of the Sinking Fund. He wished he had also followed him in the matter of the sugar tax. Sir Stafford Northcote in 1864 used words about the sugar tax which seemed to him peculiarly appropriate at the present moment. Sir Stafford said—

“ I need scarcely remind the Committee of the enormous importance of that article (*i.e.*, sugar) to trade and consumption. I believe in its importance in reference to the comforts of the people, it may be said to stand next to corn. That duty was raised for the purposes of war (the same in 1864 as in 1905). It was readjusted after the peace in 1857, but the principal part has never been removed. We propose to make a considerable reduction in the sugar duties. There certainly is an objection to making this reduction. We are labouring under a quasi-scarceness owing to diminished production and increased prices.”

That seemed to be exactly the case before them now. But Sir Stafford Northcote, in spite of that, regarded it as his duty to make a diminution in this tax. He commended that to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his next Budget, and he hoped he would give it the attention it deserved.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said he sympathised with the Chancellor because, after all, he had to find the money to carry on the business of the country, but the taxation in this case was extremely high. He agreed with every word that had fallen from the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire with regard to this matter, but the Chancellor seemed to urge that as a tax on raw material it did not injure the interests of trade. It was a very foolish policy on the part of the Government to prevent other countries sending raw material to this country cheap. These industries had grown up because of their cheapness, and if the conditions were to be altered at all, let them be altered by the people who exported the raw material into this country. The Convention had produced quite a different state of affairs abroad, as in this

country. It had given other countries cheap sugar, and as a result the industries in this country built up on that cheap raw material had suffered. Owing to competition abroad having been stimulated and strengthened by the action of the Government in connection with the Convention, this industry had an additional claim to some consideration in the matter of taxation. He admitted, of course, that the drawback did help the industries that exported. But the condition of competition abroad had been completely changed because foreign manufacturers, owing to the cheapening of sugar, were able to make articles in the manufacture of which we had had previously a monopoly. Great injury had been and was being done to our sugar industries by the policy of the Government. Industries did not die all at once, but by a system of slow starvation, and that this starving was going on would soon make itself very apparent if the Government persisted in its mischievous policy.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the hon. Baronet was right when he stated that the taxation of sugar abroad had been greatly reduced, while in Great Britain this taxation fell upon competitors who could not now obtain sugar at lower prices. The Chancellor of the Exchequer dropped a few words with respect to which he would like a further explanation. The right hon. Gentleman said he expected a less revenue from the tax this year than last year. That was a most momentous thing to say. It was a most alarming statement. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had estimated that the consumption of this most important article was decreasing. This statement should arrest the attention of the free food Gentlemen on the other side of the House. The consumption of sugar had already decreased 10 per cent. per head of the population in four years, and now the Chancellor of the Exchequer knew that there was to be a further decrease. That decrease had come after sixty years of steady progress. As the consumption of sugar had increased in this country, industries had increased in all directions. The raw material of sugar was produced by countries on the Continent which sent it here to be worked

Sir. James Joyce.

up, and the result was that we had established important industries because we could get cheap sugar. We sent it back to these countries manufactured. These industries were growing in all directions until this Government had entered upon a policy which was stifling them, and yet the majority of hon. Members on the other side of the House sat unmoved.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of the average price for the ten years before 1903. Nothing more fallacious could be stated. During these ten years machinery had been improved, and more scientific methods had been adopted in the sugar trade. The tendency of the price was downwards, and as the price got lower sugar was used in a variety of ways it had never been used before. It was not right for the Government to complacently turn back the wheels of time and stop this cheapening process. The tax itself was bad enough, but when it came on the top of a high price it became a great burden to the people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had spoken of the prices next December, but he desired to warn him that these were only gambling prices. People who were making mineral waters were not helped by the fact that there was a cheap quotation for next December or January. The right hon. Gentleman had shown that he was familiar with certain circumstances which might prevent the lowering of price. There was the possibility of drought on the Continent which they all hoped would not take place, but contingencies of that sort showed the folly of basing calculations on prophecy. Poor people were suffering greatly from the high price of sugar brought about by the manipulations of the Government. He thought the sugar tax would also require the attention of the Government on account of the expensiveness of the system of collection. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer should make the expense in connection with the collection of the tax as light as possible, and the mod as simple as possible. He suggested that the tax might be reduced to a farthing per pound.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said the sugar duty was imposed partly as a war

tax, and partly, as the then Chancellor of the Exchequer said, for the purpose of broadening the basis of taxation. One of the reasons for voting for this and other Amendments in regard to the proposed taxation was because it was a way of protesting against the expenditure of the country. We were still labouring under a burden of no less than £23,000,000 a year of taxation which was put on during the war, and which, unfortunately, had been continued in time of peace. It was obvious that it would be of advantage if the sugar tax could be reduced or abolished. It was a tax on an article of universal consumption, and, what was still more important, it was a tax on certain manufactures which had been rapidly increasing. The right hon. Gentleman had said that there were other taxes on raw material, and he instanced tobacco, but the tax on sugar affected a large number of small industries. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not deny that, in consequence of the rise in the price of sugar, due in large measure to the Convention, these industries had been injured. If the Board of Trade Returns were looked at in relation to imports, it would be seen how the rise in price of sugar had affected both the consumer and the manufacturer. If the last three months were taken there was an actual diminution of imports of sugar amounting to 922,000 cwts. refined and unrefined; and while there was a diminution of consumption of nearly 1,000,000 cwts., the country had to pay over £1,500,000 more for its sugar than before. That was partly due to the Convention to which reference had been made. To emphasise the point the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech informed the Committee that the revenue from sugar was falling off and showing no elasticity.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Oh, no. What I said was—

“Sugar, in spite of the shortage of supply and the high prices prevailing during the latter part of the year, realised £180,000 more than I had expected. Had it not been for the failure of the Continental beet crop it would very largely have exceeded my anticipations, and though under present circumstances it is necessary to make a cautious estimate of the yield from this source of revenue in the current

year, it promises to be an expanding revenue in future years, when good harvests shall have restored prices to their normal level.”

I think the hon. Gentleman will see that what he has stated hardly represents what I said on that occasion.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that possibly that might be so: but the figures he had just given to the Committee, taken from the Board of Trade Returns, showed that there was an actual diminution of the amount of sugar coming into this country of nearly 1,000,000 cwts., and that, therefore, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would get a less revenue from the sugar tax. The assumption was that the Convention had not only seriously affected the consumer and the manufacturers but had seriously affected the revenue from the sugar tax, and therefore had seriously affected the trade of the country all round. On the other hand, countries abroad had been able to reduce their sugar duties, to encourage a larger consumption of sugar by their people, and at the same time to obtain a larger revenue from their sugar duties.

He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the manufacturers here had not suffered seriously either from the sugar duty or from the action of the Convention, and the right hon. Gentleman referred to the reports of some particular firms in order to prove that point. But the figures which the right hon. Gentleman gave the Committee were not very much to the point. As he understood the right hon. Gentleman, one of the objects of the Government in proposing and carrying through the Sugar Convention was to put an end to the great fluctuations in the price of sugar. But, so far as he had been able to see, the fluctuation of prices had never been so great as in the summer of last year. At any rate, the fluctuations all tended then to a lower level, while the fluctuations since the Convention came into operation tended to a higher level. The right hon. Gentleman said that he wanted to extend the area of supply of sugar; but that was hardly the basis on which the Prime Minister had argued for the Convention. The Prime Minister stated specifically that the benefit to the West Indies was not an argument

in favour of the Convention. The evidence went to show that the increase of the sugar crop in the West Indies had been comparatively small, and that the Convention had been to the benefit of our greater sugar-producing rivals. Nobody had said that the increase in the price of sugar had been wholly due to the Convention. About half of it was, and the other half to the shortage of crop. He would support the Amendment of his hon. friend on all these grounds.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid.) said he would not have risen to take part in this debate but for the remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on what the right hon. Gentleman called the equities of taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of the millions which he derived from this form of taxation, and said that there was no other source to which he could turn to recoup himself if this tax were abolished. There was one fact lost sight of, and that was that the imposition of this tax had not only reduced the profits of the confectionery and other allied trades, but had increased the volume of the unemployed. The Government were by artificial means restricting employment in the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer talked of abolishing the sugar bounties, but why should we not take advantage of the foolishness of other people who gave us their produce freely at a cheap rate? As to the equities of taxation to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred, and the inequality of taxation between the direct and indirect taxpayer, he would quote the authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Speaking in the days when he was a Radical and when some of them on that side of the House sat at his feet as a Gamaliel, and drank in what at that time they believed was sound doctrine in politics, the right hon. Gentleman for West Birmingham referred to a village in Somerset in which the agricultural labourers paid $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of taxation on their small incomes. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that, whereas he was a comparatively rich man, he only paid at the rate of $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

He, himself, was not a learned man, but he had read Adam Smith; and he held that the burdens of the nation should be placed on the shoulders of those best able to bear them. If this country were in either a stationary or retrogressive period he could quite understand the poor bearing a large share of taxation, but we were in a progressive period when the wealth of the country was increasing by leaps and bounds. There were surely other means of getting money than by trenching upon the wages of the poor. The industries of this country depended for their impetus upon the spending of the many, and if that were limited in any way depression followed. It was time they turned to other sources of income. Much had been said about the war being the cause of the tax, but he did not think it would have been needed if the Government by their system of doles had not filled the rich with good things and sent the poor empty away. He, himself, did not want anything from the rich man that he was not entitled to pay; but there was a new spirit abroad which was not in any way iniquitous or unjust and which was opposed to the present system of taxation.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said he had no objection to taxation being raised in England, but he protested against his own countrymen being subjected to the pressure of this tax. It was iniquitous to put a fresh burden on a country such as Ireland. It was obvious that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had no regard for the happiness and contentment of the country. The tax was especially iniquitous in so far as it pressed heavily on the poorest of the poor. The hon. Member who had just spoken, and whose eloquence he would not attempt to rival, referred to labourers earning 17s. or 18s. a week, but what about the agricultural labourer in Ireland who only earned 10s. a week. The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to the equities of taxation; but a man with £1,000 was far above the line of mere subsistence, whereas the agricultural labourer was below it. The Committee did not realise the terrible conditions under which Ireland laboured.

Mr. Sydney Buxton.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said when the sugar tax was first imposed he was one of those who opposed it. He opposed it first because it was a tax on food, and secondly because it was a tax on the raw material of certain manufactures of this country. It was no argument in favour of this tax to point out, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done, that there were other taxes on food and raw material, because the whole policy of the taxation of this country for the last half century had been to lessen the taxation on food and on raw material, and the idea of all the great financiers of this country had been to gradually get rid of all those taxes. The fundamental objection to the sugar tax was that a new departure had been taken and that the whole policy of fifty years had been reversed by the imposition of a tax upon an article of food and a most important raw material for manufacture. He was one of those who ventured to prophecy that if the House was so complacent as to accept this tax the principle would very soon be extended to other articles. His prophecy was received with shouts of laughter and great ridicule, but within two years of the imposition of the tax upon sugar they had a tax upon wheat, and then developed the great scheme of consolidating the Empire on the basis of preferential duties. He objected to this tax upon principle. It was a vicious tax. It was not only a tax which in its incidence was unjust to the poor, but it was a tax which should be reversed on principle, because if they once admitted the justice of a tax upon sugar they would have to admit in the future many other taxes on food on the same principle.

The case against the imposition of the sugar tax had been enormously increased by the effect of the Sugar Convention. It was all very well to say that the sugar tax had had no effect in the shape of injuring the power of our manufacturers to compete with the manufacturers of foreign countries because they received a rebate on the goods exported, but when the cost was enormously increased on all that portion of the trade which was consumed in this country, and when the profits were enormously depleted, to say that the power of the manufacturers to compete was not crippled owing to that

enormous depletion of profits was absurd. The strength of the claim of the manufacturers of sugar products had enormously increased by the rise in prices owing to the Sugar Convention. When the tax was debated on a former occasion some of them had taken the trouble to investigate the facts as to the consumption of sugar by other countries, and they found that the consumption in England and Ireland had risen to more than double that of Germany and other countries. Since the Convention the consumption of sugar in other countries had been rising rapidly and the consumption here had been falling off, and that alone was sufficient to condemn this tax.

*MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) expressed the opinion that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should give an assurance that this tax should not partake of a permanent character. The sugar tax was first of all put on as a temporary tax in order to obtain revenue for war purposes, but now they were told that it was to be a permanent tax. In his opinion the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not considered enough the enormous injury done to the confectionery trade. He had not considered sufficiently the fact that there was no trade where an advance or a reduction of prices made such a difference in the consumption as it did in the confectionery trade. Each reduction in the price of sugar increased consumption to an enormous extent, and that must necessarily always be so, because with a low-priced sugar the manufacturers were able to produce a low-priced jam and were thus able to bring that product within reach of every consumer. Even in so small a matter as a pennyworth of sweets the children got more for their money when sugar was cheap than they did when it was dear. He was certain that if this tax was continued the revenue from it would very much decrease. Confectionery manufacturers had a real grievance. Owing to the bounties, Continental countries contracted themselves out of a prosperous business. The people of this country had all the benefit of protection without any of the ills; they had cheap sugar, while Continental consumers had dear sugar. The Government had most stupidly given away that

advantage, and the positions were now reversed, with the result that enormous confectionery works were starting up all over the Continent to compete in their own markets and possibly in ours. As that was entirely due to the action of the Government, he submitted that British manufacturers should not be handicapped even in the home market by a heavy duty. The rebate would not put the matter right; he believed that sooner or later the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have to remove, if not the whole, at any rate the greater part of the duty. Even if the duty was kept on the revenue was almost certain to decrease from it because the consumption would be less. He thought, therefore, on account both of the poor consumer and of the great hardship inflicted on the confectionery trade, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should hold out some hope of a reduction in the duty.

Mr. HARWOOD (Bolton) said it was becoming more and more an accepted fact that sugar was a necessity of nutriment, and that for a nation to be well nourished it must be a tolerably large consumer of sugar. A nation to be great must be a well-nourished nation; to be well nourished it must have reasonable supplies of sugar; to have reasonable supplies of sugar it must be able to get sugar at a reasonable price. That being so the making of the tax permanent became a serious matter, because it dealt a blow at the physical development of the nation, upon which the national prosperity depended. What did the Chancellor of the Exchequer mean by the "equities of taxation?" The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the equities were met by taking a class of the population and saying that as there were so many people in it they should pay so much. That was a very false idea of the matter. The equity of taxation would rather suggest that people on the starvation line should pay nothing at all, and that as they rose above that line then taxes should increase. The Chancellor of the Exchequer should bear in mind the great principle that it was not for the good of the country that people on the starvation line should be

taxed. For the good of the nation their lot should be made as easy as possible. He would put that point as an employer of labour. The great necessity of labour was that it should be fairly nourished; we could not maintain our manufacturing position in the world without a decently fed working class, and that could not be had if they were taxed out of proportion. The simple equities of taxation in the case of a farm labourer, who had to bring up a family on 10s. a week, were that he should pay no taxes at all; he was contributing his labour, which was the most valuable element in the national life. The Chancellor of the Exchequer ought to be very careful in fastening permanently around the neck of the nation a burden which would drag the nation down for ever.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) remarked on the fact that while Member after Member on the other side got up and urged that a concession should be made in regard to the tobacco tax, none of them had assisted the Opposition in their efforts to secure a modification of the sugar duty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University was a strong advocate of the feeding of poor children in schools, but he had not said a single word on this occasion on behalf of the people he desired to help. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had spoken strongly as the friend of the people, but where was his eloquent voice that day? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon appeared to be no longer a stalwart, his speech gave the impression that he was finding his way back to the fold. Why had not a single Unionist Member supported this appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. What was the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman? He had thrown over the coal tax because the influence against him was too great, and they knew that one of the first proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, should the opportunity arise, would be the abolition of the coal tax. They had practically heard the end of the tax on stripped tobacco, but the right hon. Gentleman had absolutely shut the door with a bang in regard to sugar, and he had declared that he could not give any

Mr. Crawley.

pledge at all in regard to the repeal of the sugar tax. That marked a very important departure as compared with the position he took up a few years ago. He remembered the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, who stated that this was a temporary tax to raise war taxation. That had been the position right through, and yet that night the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he could not give any pledge. Had this attitude anything to do with possible fiscal changes? It was admitted that the poor paid more proportionately than the richer classes, and that the right hon. Gentleman could not deny. It was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to recognise the force of argument, and that on this occasion was in favour of a reduction of this tax. He could not conceive a better argument with which to go to the constituencies of hon. Members opposite than to say that they had voted against a reduction of the sugar tax. The hon. Member for Gravesend represented a working-class constituency; was he going to vote for dear sugar? He knew that colonial preference was in their mind. Upon an occasion when this question was vitally affecting their interests, it was remarkable that not a single Unionist Member had raised his voice in favour of a reduction of this tax.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he was dead against the sugar tax, and nothing would induce him to vote against the Amendment. This tax had every defect which a tax could possibly have. It had now become permanent in its nature and it was one of those taxes which had been withdrawn from annual revision by the House. He objected to this tax on the ground that taxes on raw material were odious and impolitic because they interfered with trade. Taxes on food were still more odious, because food was the raw material of man, and the Prime Minister had declared that he would never be a party to imposing taxation either upon raw material or upon food. ["When?"] He could not give the date, as the right hon. Gentleman had made so many declarations. This tax had all the objections which applied to raw material and food, because it was a tax on both. Sugar was an article which the

ingenuity of the British, and especially the Scottish people, had worked up into the most tempting forms of marmalades and jams, which had competed most successfully and completely with similar manufactures on the Continent, because they had cheap sugar in this country. The worst of it was that things had been made far more onerous and mischievous for those engaged in the sugar industries by the Brussels Convention, whereby they had not only put a tax upon sugar, but they had also restricted the countries from which they could obtain a supply of sugar.

He told the House the other day, and he repeated now, that the question was—What does the poor man pay for his sugar? The year before the Sugar Convention, at King's Lynn—a most admirable and industrious town, but a place where the people were very poor—the price paid to the retail dealer was 1½d. per pound for sugar. The price now paid for the same sugar to the same dealer was 2½d. per pound. That was the result to the poor man, and the result, though less serious, was still very serious to the more wealthy manufacturers, who formerly made jam preserves with this sugar and competed with the foreign manufacturers of these same things and beat them. The right hon. Gentleman talked about the artificial price of sugar before we reverted to that original order of nature which was embodied, he presumed, in the Brussels Convention. What was an artificial price? If a man wanted to sell his stock at half the cost he did not feel himself debarred from taking the price the seller was willing to pay. It was now, after the Convention had come into operation, that the artificial condition had arisen by prohibiting sugar from coming to these shores and preventing the enlargement of the area of supplies. The two things together made the grievance. The price of sugar had been doubled. He frankly confessed that his grievance was against the Convention much more than against the sugar duty, for this reason: We could diminish or take off the sugar duty as we pleased, but that was not so with reference to the conditions of the Convention. He would not vote in support of the sugar duty. He still believed in the necessity of maintaining the food of the people of this country untaxed.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 166;
Noes, 231. (Division List No. 187.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt Hon Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, Sir John
Barlow, John Emmott
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Blake, Edward
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Crombie, John William
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, Capt EC (S Andrw's Bghs)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Field, William
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE)
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Gilhooly, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hammond, John
Harwood, George

Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hobhouse, C.E.H. (Bristol, E.)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson, John
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson P.
Kennedy, Vincent E. (Cavan, W.)
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F (Accrington)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Rt Hon. John (Montrose)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)

Philipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomas, JA (Glamorgan, Gower)
Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters (N Dorset)
Wilson, Chas. Henry (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
Herbert Gladstone and Mr.
Spencer.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitzroy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarras, Lord

Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. (Harmood-
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James

Bill, Charles
 Bingham, Lord
 Bond, Edward
 Boulnois, Edmund
 Brassey, Albert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brotherton, Edward Allen
 Brymer, William Ernest
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, J.H.M. (Dublin Univ.)
 Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
 Cautley, Henry Strother
 Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn.J.A. (Worc.)
 Chapman, Edward
 Clive, Captain Percy A.
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
 Coddington, Sir William
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Conham, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C.R.
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Cust, Henry John C.
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Denny, Colonel
 Dickinson, Robert Edmond
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
 Doughty, Sir George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
 Faber, George Denison (York)
 Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manx'r
 Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
 Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
 Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'n'ss B'ghs)
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
 Flower, Sir Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S.W.)
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gardner, Ernest
 Garfit, William
 Gordon, Hn. J.E. (Elgin & Nairn)
 Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
 Grenfell, William Henry
 Gretton, John
 Hunter, Sir Robert
 Iain, Edward
 Hall, Edward Marshall
 Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
 Hambro, Charles Eric

Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord G. (Mid'd'x
 Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'rerry)
 Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th)
 Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
 Hay, Hon. Claude George
 Heath, Sir James (Staffords. NW)
 Helder, Augustus
 Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hoare, Sir Samuel
 Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Houlst, Joseph
 Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hunt, Rowland
 Jameson, Major J. Eustace
 Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
 Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
 Kimber, Sir Henry
 King, Sir Henry Seymour
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawson, Hn. H.L.W. (Mile End)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N R)
 Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Frederick N S.
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Maconochie, A. W.
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
 Majendie, James A. H.
 Malcolm, Ian
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n)
 Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire)
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Middlemore, John Throgmorton
 Midmay, Francis Bingham
 Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Frederick G.
 Milvain, Thomas
 Molesworth, Sir Lewis
 Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow)
 Morpeth, Viscount
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mount, William Arthur
 Myers, William Henry
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
 Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert

Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rankin, Sir James
 Ratcliff, R. F.
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Remnant, James Farquharson
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Renwick, George
 Ridley, S. Forde
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rollitt, Sir Albert Kaye
 Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Rutherford, W.W. (Liverpool)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
 Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
 Sloan, Thomas Henry
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
 Smith, H. C. (North'mb. Tyneside)
 Smith, Rt. Hn. J. Parker (Lanarks)
 Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stock, James Henry
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Stroyan, John
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tuff, Charles
 Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Vincent, Col. Sir CEH. (Sheffield)
 Walker, Col. William Hall
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R. (Bath)
 Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
 Wrightson, Sir Thomas
 Yerburch, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Viscount Valentia.

*MR. CHARLES DOUGLAS (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said the point raised by the new clause which he proposed was quite separate from the general argument on the subject of the coal tax. He put forward this Amendment as a plea for equitable treatment in the imposition of the coal tax. He was sure that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, realising from the previous debate on the coal duty its unpopularity in all parts of the House and in all parts of the country, and that he had not been able to defend it with seriousness, would desire to do anything he could to diminish that unpopularity, and make its incidence a little more equitable. The Amendment he desired to move was to exempt coal nuts manufactured from dross, provided it was proved to the Commissioners of Customs that the value of such dross delivered free on board would not exceed 6s. per ton.

He ought to explain for the benefit of hon. Members what coal nuts precisely were. It was the practice in Scotland, and also to an increasing extent in the North of England, to wash the dross with water, and then grade the several sizes of coal which it contained, so as to form different qualities of what were called nuts. A large and expensive plant was necessary and a great deal of labour was employed in dealing with the dross in this manner. The contention he put forward was that coal nuts were a manufactured form of fuel, involving the use of machinery which had to be periodically renewed. Therefore coal nuts ought to be treated on the same footing as other manufactured fuel. The Finance Act of 1901 admitted a rebate on all products manufactured from coal whose price fell below the level at which coal was taxed. A rebate was given on all coal which entered into the composition of patent fuel if it were valued below 6s. a ton. He contended that that exemption should be applied to coal nuts. The only difference between coal nuts and patent fuel was that a certain amount of pitch was employed in the manufacture of patent fuel. But in both cases a quantity of coal worth less than 6s. per ton was manufactured so as to form a product worth more than that sum. The cheapest class of nuts could not be

sold abroad at a price which would bear the duty. The result was that coalowners were obliged to sell cheaper abroad than in the home market. Was that reasonable? It was not good business to encourage and even compel a coalowner to sell his coal abroad cheaper than he could sell it at home. He did not suggest that the rebate in connection with patent fuel was an improper rebate; but it should be extended to other manufactured articles. There ought to be equality of treatment as between the different articles.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

— EVENING SITTING. —

FINANCE BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

*MR. CHARLES DOUGLAS said that before the interval he had almost concluded his explanation of the reasons why he desired the Committee to give a rebate to coal nuts. The raw material of this manufacture was in itself really valueless. It was certainly not of any export value and could not be profitably put on any foreign market, and nobody who knew anything about it would ever suggest that it was worth anything like 6s. a ton. The principle was already accepted in the case of other manufactured products of coal made from raw material of below the value of 6s. a ton, and he thought a complete case was made out for asking for a rebate in this instance on the ground, if on no other, of equal treatment to all industries connected with the manufacture of the waste product of coal. The right hon. Gentleman was aware of the unpopularity of the tax as a whole, and that in itself should appeal to his mind as a strong

reason for redressing any grievance and removing any injustice and hardship in respect of a tax which was regarded by all concerned as a most inequitable one.

Clause (Coal nuts), — (*Mr. Charles Douglas*)—brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

MR. BAIRD (Glasgow, Central) supported the Motion of the hon. Member. He could quite understand that no Chancellor of the Exchequer cared to relinquish any part of a tax, but on the other hand he was equally sure the right hon. Gentleman did not wish to do any injustice to any particular trade. He had, therefore, great hopes that the right hon. Gentleman would give a satisfactory reply and would be able to tell them that if he could not make this concession now he would do so at the earliest opportunity. The industry affected was subsidiary to the coal industry and had only grown up in the last few years. The raw material was a poor description of coal filled with dross and impurities which by itself was practically worthless. By manufacture, however, an article was produced which had a certain market both in this country and abroad. Had this tax been in force a little earlier than was the case, in his opinion, this industry would never have grown up and the raw material would have been wasted. In his view a process which gave employment to a great deal of labour and utilised a waste product for the benefit of the community was not one that should be interfered with, and anything that would deter that trade should as far as possible be avoided. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would give a favourable consideration to this matter.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) joined in the appeal made by both his hon. friends to the right hon. Gentleman to see whether he could not accept the clause which his hon. friend had moved. The sum at stake was a very small sum. It was not a sum like the coal tax which

brought in about £2,000,000 a year. The question of nuts was a small matter, and if the right hon. Gentleman gave the same equality of treatment to the manufacture of nuts as he did to briquettes it would not cost him more than £40,000 a year. Seeing that this industry employed large numbers of people he thought something ought to be done to encourage it. By this industry a waste product was turned into a by-product and the difference between waste products and by-products often determined the prosperity of a trade. Having regard to the fact that the raw material of this growing trade was of a much lower value than 6s. a ton he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to give effect to the clause moved by his hon. friend.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) thought that everybody who spoke upon this subject would no doubt take the same view, because the case they had to present was absolutely overwhelming. The case which they presented that night was not a question of the general coal tax which, for the time, was settled on the previous day, but a question arising out of the rebate given under the tax in order to make it possible for the cheapest class of coal to be utilised for the public benefit. It was perfectly certain that that was what was in the mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and in the mind of Parliament when the Bill was passed. In the case of patent fuel the language of the Act was so drawn as to cover that particular class of goods. He was not certain whether the language of the Act would not cover the case the Committee was now discussing. It was a different question, but the same principle which governed the question of patent fuel made from dross and coal dust certainly ought to cover this case. The argument they used was not the *me quoque* argument that because a rebate was given to Welsh briquettes it ought to be given to coal nuts. They used this argument because the principle which governed the Welsh briquettes was right and just, and therefore it ought to be applied to coal nuts. Hon. Members would agree that one of the primary objects of taxation must always be to endeavour not to discourage

industries which gave employment in this country and not to check the growth of any industry, where such industry was liable to be most seriously interfered with by existing taxation. Here was a case in which this class of small coal and dross, which in the past was wasted altogether, which people could hardly be induced to take away, had been turned into a saleable article in this country and into a large staple of foreign export by an industry which had only sprung up of late years. No argument was needed to support the proposition that an industry of that sort ought to be encouraged rather than discouraged.

But when a Chancellor of the Exchequer was pressed to make any concession he was always tempted to ask, and very naturally did ask, where such a concession would lead him and what would be the result that must follow if he made such a concession. He (Mr. Parker Smith) did not see that any dangerous extension could follow from the right hon. Gentleman treading in the path in which they desired him to tread. All they asked the right hon. Gentleman to do was to give a rebate upon this stuff, which in its unmanufactured state was unsaleable, and to show him that this shilling tax must inevitably kill the industry. This was a question which pressed very heavily on Scotland, where the coal was of a very poor and cheap quality, and where the competition of Westphalian and German coal was particularly keen, necessitating highly scientific methods on the part of Scotch miners in order to compete at all. Continuous complaints had been received of their inability to give to the foreign purchaser that uniformity of quality and cleanliness in the article which he desired for the economical working of his furnaces. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had expressed the wish that there might be an agreement come to between the various sections of the coal industry with regard to what they required, but there could be no agreement in regard to an *ad valorem* duty for obvious reasons. It was different in a matter of this kind, because this was a question which only affected those collieries which produced the poorest quality of coals. He contended that if a manufacturer took coal at its lowest value, and by the process of washing,

grinding, and manufacture produced an article of higher value, he ought to have the benefit of the increased value, and for the purposes of taxation that product ought still to be taken at the lowest price of the raw material. That was the only fair way of treating this class of goods.

It must be remembered that the washing machinery used for this purpose was not the mere scaffolding at the pit-head with which those who knew nothing of the subject often confounded it. It was more comparable with a flour mill, and might cost anything up to £50,000. That showed the expenditure of making coal nuts, an expenditure much larger than that involved in making Welsh briquettes; yet under the present arrangements Welsh briquettes, which were sold at something like twelve shillings a ton, had the full rebate, and coal nuts, which were only worth seven shillings a ton, got no rebate at all but had to bear the full weight of this shilling tax. In some of the foreign markets they were very particular as to the appearance of coal, and it was the regular thing as the last process in the making of nuts to wash them with clean water. Suppose that as a final process the nuts were washed in sugar and water to give them a bright appearance, there would then be a mixture of which perhaps 99·9 per cent. would be coal and ·1 per cent. sugar. Would that be a mixture on which the rebate could be claimed? The value of briquettes did not arise simply from the addition of pitch; they were brought from dross of no value to a commodity worth 12s. or 13s. a ton by a variety of processes closely resembling those through which nuts had to go, and if the principle were accepted that briquettes made out of cheap dross were not to be taxed, the same principle should apply to nuts. The total export of nuts amounted to about 1,500,000 tons, a large part of which consisted of the cheaper nuts on which no duty was paid, because if they could not be exported under 6s. they could not be exported at all. Thus the amount gained by the Exchequer from nuts represented less than half the weight exported, and was only about £40,000 a year. The industry was doubtless growing, and if they could get a process adopted which brought a marketable article out of what was formerly waste dross, whether

Mr. Parker Smith.

it was consumed at home or abroad, it was a clear gain to the nation, but it was impossible for the industry to flourish if the export was hampered or diminished.

A shilling was a serious weight to carry, and it bore with extreme heaviness upon the cheapest coals and those on the margin of exemption. The Act of 1901 was passed when the coal industry was very flourishing, but the conditions were now much altered, and in the present state of depression the people concerned expected to be met with much more consideration than was meted out to them in their time of prosperity. The object of our whole fiscal system should be to encourage industry, and not to snatch revenue, and he regarded the whole coal tax as a relict of recent unenlightened times. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would make a beginning with this small item in the application of the general principles of scientific taxation.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) hoped that after what had occurred yesterday, when, with the exception of the Chancellor's own remarks, not a single speech was delivered in favour of the coal tax, the present proposal would receive favourable consideration. The question of small coal stood in a totally different position from that discussed yesterday. The article now being dealt with was until quite recently of no value, being absolutely unsaleable. Hundreds and thousands of tons of national wealth in this shape had been thrown back into the pit because it was not worth bringing to the surface, and the amount that did get to the surface was a nuisance to the owners; it was laid out in large heaps around the collieries, where it became an absolute danger to the health of the people. That condition of affairs had now been to a large extent altered. After huge expenditure on expensive machinery and the employment of additional labour, this coal was washed and cleaned and brought into a saleable condition. The tax, however, was leviable not on the value of the article at the mine, but on the value delivered f.o.b. after it had undergone the processes of washing and manufacture. The article was of no value until it had been treated in a very elaborate and

expensive way, and yet it was subjected to taxation just the same as other coal not so treated. He thought the Chancellor of the Exchequer could very well grant the exemption under the conditions stated in the proposed clause, and that the loss to the revenue would not be so considerable as had been suggested. It was hardly possible for those engaged in this industry to put their product on the foreign market under existing conditions. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had urged that British colliery proprietors should imitate the more scientific methods of their German competitors. Here was a case where they were trying to do something in that direction and to get all that was possible out of the national wealth in their possession, and he asked that the right hon. Gentleman should not continue the operation of a tax which tended to check the development of a process which would provide additional employment to the industrial classes of the country. The tax was really an impost upon a process of manufacture, because without the process the coal would be worthless. Nothing should be done to discourage men who were willing to put their capital into a process likely to develop into a new and growing industry, which would bring comfort and prosperity to a large body of people, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would agree to grant the rebate asked for by the Amendment under discussion.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that too much stress must not be laid on the fact that his own speech was the only one delivered in favour of the coal tax yesterday. He had been Chancellor of the Exchequer long enough to know that in defending the public treasury he could count upon no support except that of his own arm, strong or weak as it might be. It was those who were dissatisfied with his action who made their voices heard in these debates, and those who agreed with him could render him no greater service than to record silent votes in his support. If all those who agreed with his proposals thought it right to express their approval in debate the discussions in Committee, even on an uncontentious Budget, would be almost interminable.

The mover of the Amendment under discussion based his claim for the exemption of nuts on the precedent of patent fuel or briquettes. No sooner had the Budget of 1901 become law than the Lanarkshire Coalmasters' Association approached his predecessor the right hon. Member for West Bristol and asked him to consider this question. His right hon. friend went into the matter at length in a correspondence with the association, and the case made out by the right hon. Member for West Bristol for distinguishing between nuts and briquettes was much more solid and real than hon. Members might be ready to admit. Certainly he had not been impressed by the force of the reasoning of the mover of the Amendment when he attempted to assimilate the case of the two. Under what conditions did briquettes or patent fuel obtain rebate? Under a sub-section of the Act it was provided that if an article was mingled with another article on which duty was charged, and was exported in a mixed state, then the duty was to be charged, not on the whole weight of the export, but on the amount of the dutiable material which it contained. In the case of briquettes or patent fuel, there was the pitch—which, in view of the warning of the hon. Member opposite, he would handle delicately—which was not dutiable; then there was the coal below the value of 6s., which also was not dutiable; then there was a certain amount of other coal of a higher value than 6s., and upon that duty was charged. In nuts, however, there was no material which was not dutiable, because there was no admixture of anything which was not coal, and there was no coal which did not exceed the value of 6s. a ton. They could not, therefore, claim an exemption on the grounds which secured the exemption of briquettes. But he admitted that that was not the whole of the case. If it were, and the whole case rested on a comparison, with patent fuel and briquettes, he would agree that nuts differed from patent fuel and were not at all entitled to exemption.

But the whole case as stated did not rest there. It had been pleaded by hon. Members that the tax had a direct deterrent effect on the process of preparing this species of coal for sale. He felt the force of that argument. It was

true that this process of washing was comparatively a novel one, that it had been introduced in recent years, first in Scotland, and that it was just beginning to spread to other districts. We were probably only at the beginning of its development, and he would be sorry to see the development checked unnecessarily if he could possibly avoid it. So far he was in complete accord with the argument on that portion of the case which had been addressed to him. No part of the Report of the Royal Commission was of more interest to the trade than that in which they dealt with this subject of the preparation of coal for market, and none was of greater consequence to the future of the trade, and none, therefore, deserving of more serious consideration both of the trade and the Government when it was alleged that the particular provision they were now considering acted as a direct deterrent to improvements. But this was a new contention presented to him practically for the first time. He received joint deputations from the whole of the coal trade last year, and this year he had met two deputations, one representing the owners, managers, and shippers, and the other deputation representing the miners, and workers in and about the mine. They addressed very interesting speeches to him which were now more or less familiar to the House, because naturally they formed the subject-matter of the debate yesterday, but he did not think that either of the two deputations he had received this year directed his attention to this new phase of the subject. The first attempt to call his serious attention to this matter was a letter from the Scottish Exporters' Association, which was dated on the very day that the Budget was introduced, and apparently after the contents of the Budget were known. It was not till the Budget was an accomplished fact that the matter was brought to his attention.

He had been looking into this matter, and had been much struck, he regretted to say, with the complications to which the proposal gave rise and the difficulties which surrounded any attempt to meet the objects sought to be attained. In the first place, if they adopted the principle, they would make a revolutionary change in the

whole basis of the tax which would, in many cases, seriously affect the revenue, and in some cases have the result, not of relieving the coal from duty, but of bringing coal now exempt within the purview of the duty. His second difficulty was not a less one. The concession which his predecessor made on behalf of briquettes was now pleaded as involving this further concession on behalf of nuts. If he could see his way to making the concession on behalf of nuts, had he any assurance that that concession would not be treated merely as giving hon. Gentlemen a stronger right to claim still further concessions? The process of washing required the provision of costly machinery which added to the cost of production. But would it be agreed by the trade at large that a line might fairly be drawn at such a process, and that a concession in respect of coal so washed would not be followed by a claim for a similar concession in regard to screens? It was very difficult to find a logical basis for the distinction which he had been asked to draw.

In view of the short time he had had for the consideration of the matter and the many difficulties he saw, it was impossible he should accept the Amendment as it stood, or even promise that he would bring up proposals another year which would be directed to meeting the object of the hon. Gentlemen opposite. At the same time, he recognised the strength of the case which had been brought forward in respect of this process on its own merits—not as following the analogy of briquettes—and he was anxious to find a way of removing any deterrent effect which the Act might have on those engaged in the preparation of coal for marketing. He would certainly consider whether that could be done, and he thought his task would be facilitated if gentlemen interested in the coal trade could assist him to draw a line of distinction which would be generally accepted by the trade itself. That was as far as he could go at the present time. Those interested would see that he was not insensible to the case which had been presented to him, and he would give it his best consideration, and he hoped he would have their

co-operation in endeavouring in the course of next year to arrive at some common agreement upon this subject.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said that at present considerable expenditure was necessary in order to prevent the pollution of rivers as a result of screening and washing the coal, and some consideration should be shown to those who thus kept the rivers pure. This tax bore very heavily on those who worked certain coal seams in Scotland, a large proportion of the coal from which could not be put on the market without first undergoing the process of washing and screening. The coal from a good many of these Scotch seams would be put out of the market altogether unless it could be treated differently. A great proportion of the Scotch coal was about the value of 6s. or 7s. per ton. As soon as the value rose above 6s. they found themselves under the tax, and therefore he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider the effect of this tax upon cheap Scotch coal. The tax hit the particular process adopted in Scotland very heavily, and he trusted that when the right hon. Gentleman had considered the matter he would be able to give them a rebate another year.

*MR. FINDLAY (Lanarkshire, N.E.) said he was very pleased to hear the sympathetic remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but they would like him to go a little further. He wished to say a few words about a district in Lanarkshire with which he was associated and which was affected by this tax. As hon. Members were aware, there had been a great increase of late in the use of bye-products, and the utilisation of what hitherto had been waste material had proved a valuable asset in many industries and had had much to do with the prosperity of trade in a great many parts of the country, and this ought to be encouraged. In Lanarkshire there was a great depression in the coal trade and many miners were idle. There had been a number of installations of this washing process, and this helped considerably in the production of these bye-products. He would not go into detail because the process had been so well explained by the hon. Member

for Partick, but he knew the heavy cost of these installations, and how they brought into the market what might otherwise be wasted, and in any case it made the result more useful as a commercial asset. In the district he referred to they required something to stimulate the trade, and by allowing a rebate upon these nuts produced by screening and washing the trade would be greatly helped, and they would be assisted in getting a market for this class of coal. He wished to emphasise very strongly what had been said as to the proposal contained in the Motion under discussion being helpful to districts in Scotland which were now suffering very seriously from depression and he hoped the Motion would be agreed to.

MR. McKENNA said the first observation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that this phase of the subject had only been presented to him upon the present occasion, but he had apparently forgotten that when the coal tax was under discussion upon a previous occasion he told them that the question was still *sub judice*, because it was being considered by a Commission. The Report of that Commission was now available, and the evidence showed the great advantage derived from this process, and that much small coal was brought up and sold to advantage after washing. That fact was brought out last year, and therefore he did not think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was entitled to give as a reason for not accepting this clause the fact that he had not had this case brought before his notice. He thought it was a little unfair to give that as a reason why this simple measure of justice should not be extended to those persons who were engaged in this process of washing coal. The fact that this operation of washing took place after the coal had reached the pit's mouth was no argument against granting this exemption.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he understood the proposal brought forward by the hon. Gentleman opposite was that he should consider the condition in which the coal came out of the pit, and not the condition in which it was put on board ship. The hon. Member wanted him to go back to the value when the

coal came out of the pit, instead of taking the value after it had been screened.

MR. McKENNA still thought that the right hon. Gentleman had not seen the objection which was being taken to his argument in this case. It was to the condition after the first screening and before it was washed that he asked the right hon. Gentleman's attention. The right hon. Gentleman should take into account that this refuse was not worth 6s. per ton. When the coal was first brought out from the pit's mouth they could not distinguish what was above and what was below the value at which the tax operated. It was only after screening that that could be done. The dross was subsequently washed and it was only the process of washing that gave it any value. Was it reasonable for the purpose of taxation to take the value after it had been washed? This dross, which was absolutely worthless when it came out of the pit's mouth, was subjected to the expensive process of washing, with the result that a material was produced which was worth 7s. per ton. This material could be sold at home or abroad. If it was sent abroad it came into competition with foreign products. Only 7s. per ton was asked for it if sold at home, but if it was sent abroad the foreigner would not pay 8s. per ton for it in order to recoup the seller for the shilling duty on the export. The consequence was that if it had to be sold abroad it had to be offered at 6s. per ton. The exporters, therefore, would be selling at less than cost price. The only thing that could induce them to do that was that production on a large scale reduced the cost of washing the nuts, and they were able to sell so much at 7s. per ton and so repay themselves for selling abroad at less than cost price. The result was that we supplied our foreign competitors with an article necessary to carry on their manufactures at less than cost price while charging the home manufacturers a higher price for coal without which they could not carry on their business. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not accept the clause proposed he would enable our foreign competitors to get these nuts at a lower price than the British manufacturers. Was it reasonable that a product like coal should go out of the country at less

Mr. Findlay.

than cost price, while our own manufacturers were charged a higher price in consequence? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had pleaded for the better employment of the working classes, and he would appeal to him to take off a tax which produced an insignificant amount of revenue, but which might be the means of preventing the full employment of the expensive machinery which had been put up for the carrying on of this trade and of the workers who were engaged in it. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take these matters into consideration, forgetting for the moment the objection which had been raised to the coal tax as a whole.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN appealed to the Committee to second his efforts to bring the discussion on the Bill to a conclusion at a reasonable hour. The discussions on the Bill, it would be admitted, had been very full.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) said Scotland was more hardly hit by this tax than England, and Mid-Lanark was more hardly hit than any of the other constituencies of Scotland. He wished to point out the fallacy of taking general statistics to support this tax as the Chancellor of the Exchequer had done. Taking Great Britain as a whole there had been an increase in 1904 of 3 per cent. over 1903, but if the case of Scotland alone were taken the state of matters was somewhat different. In Scotland in 1880 the exports were under 2,000,000 tons; in 1890 they were upwards of 4,000,000 tons; in 1900 they were upwards of 7,000,000 tons. While for Great Britain as a whole, according to the statistics, between 1880 and 1900 the exports had increased two and a-half times, those of Scotland had increased four times. There had, therefore, been an enormous increase in Scotland before the imposition of the coal tax. Since the coal tax had been in operation there had been an increase in the exports for the whole of Great Britain of about 3 per cent. in 1904, but during that period in Scotland there had been a decrease of 150,000 tons. That showed the fallacy of taking the statistics of the whole country in dealing with this question.

The exports from Scotland had decreased because the coal produced there was inferior in quality to that produced in England. In Scotland itself there were varieties of quality. Fifeshire coal was of a superior class, and the collieries there were nearer the points of embarkation, the rates ranging from 6d. to 1s. per ton. The general statistics of Scotland would not meet the case of Lanarkshire, Ayrshire, and Midlothian, where what was called the "main" coal was worked out, and they were working a lower seam of inferior quality from which the nuts were manufactured to be sent abroad. It would be seen, therefore, that certain localities in Scotland suffered heavily from the method in which this tax was levied. In Lanarkshire the average price of coal was 6s. 2d. per ton, and the dross which came out of the lower workings was only worth about 9d. per ton at the pit. This was the material from which the nuts were separated and sold at about 6s. per ton. It was by setting up machinery and the employment of labour that material which was not worth 1s. per ton when it came out of the pit was manufactured into a material which was sold at about 6s. per ton. Lanarkshire was badly situated in regard to carriage. For example, the carriage from Lesmahagow to Glasgow was 2s. per ton, from Larkhall 1s. 4d., and from Hamilton 1s. If the coal was sent to Grangemouth the rate was 2s. per ton, so that the Committee could see that certain districts were particularly struck at by the tax. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the case of coal coming out of the pit, and the necessity for separating the good coal from the dross and selling one at a cheaper and the other at a dearer price. That was not the case here. If the price of coal free on board was 6s. 6d. it would be an advantage to sell it at 5s. 9d., and so avoid the payment of the shilling duty, but it could not be said that that would be for the advantage of the revenue.

What was the practical effect of the tax in the case of Mid-Lanark? In the Larkhall district Messrs. Hamilton, McCulloch & Co. had closed the Bog and Holm Farm Collieries in Larkhall, and the Barncheth and Silvertown Hill in the Hamilton district. Several others in the same district had been closed. The Bardykes

Colliery, near Cambuslang, where about 700 persons were employed above and below ground, had also been closed. The closing of the latter was owing to the refusal of the landlord to reduce the mining royalty 2d. per ton. The 2d. per ton mining royalty was the determining factor in that case, but then it should be remembered that the royalty was on the whole output of coal for home consumption as well as for export. Great hardships resulted from the closing of collieries. Landlords who had dwelling-houses to let could not find tenants, and shopkeepers did not find business profitable. The people in these districts would not object if this state of things were caused by the natural law of supply and demand, but when they found that it was caused by the Government putting on this tax they felt they had a grievance. Although the nominal wage of a miner was 5s. 6d. a day, in reality he only made about 23s. per week. No one would say it was not of great importance that in a district of that kind there should be as much labour provided as possible in the way of sifting and washing the dross and making nuts. It was not pleasant to find that they had to pay a tax of a shilling per ton on the product of their labour.

It might be asked — Why did Lanarkshire still go on exporting coal in these depressed circumstances?

The answer was very plain. In the first place profits had disappeared so far as the coalowners were concerned, and as to the miners, their wages had been reduced 67 per cent. since 1900. It was only in the hope that matters might take a turn that they had been struggling on in these depressed circumstances. In Westphalia coal was sold at a high price near the pit, at a less price where there was greater railway carriage, and at a still less price where the coal came into competition with that from this country. Therefore it was the cheaper quality of coal, such as that sent from Lanarkshire, which had to bear the heaviest competition. When the details were looked into the Committee would see that the hardships of the shilling duty were very great in the districts which produced the cheaper qualities of coal. It had the injurious effect of putting people out of work, and of lessening the opportunity of getting help on account of the general state of poverty in the districts. He was surprised that the Government had not seen their way to give a sympathetic ear to the appeals which had been made to them in connection with this tax.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 127; Noes, 164. (Division List No. 188.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
 Allen, Charles P.
 Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Bell, Richard
 Benn, John Williams
 Boland, John
 Brigg, John
 Bright, Allan Heywood
 Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
 Burt, Thomas
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Cremer, William Randal
 Crombie, John William
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Delany, William
 Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Doogan, P. C.
 Edwards, Frank

Ellice, Capt EC (S. Andw's Bghs)
 Emmott, Alfred
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
 Eve, Harry Trelawney
 Fenwick, Charles
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Field, William
 Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE)
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Gilhooly, James
 Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbert John
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
 Hammond, John
 Harwood, George
 Hayden, John Patrick
 Helme, Norval Watson
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
 Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
 Higham, John Sharp
 Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
 Holland, Sir William Henry
 Johnson, John
 Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)

Joyce, Michael
 Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
 Kilbride, Denis
 Kitson, Sir James
 Lambert, George
 Lamont, Norman
 Langley, Batty
 Law, Hugh Alex (Donegal, W.)
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Leese, Sir Joseph F (Accrington)
 Leigh, Sir Joseph
 Levy, Maurice
 Lough, Thomas
 London, W.
 MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Crae, George
 M'Kean, John
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 Mansfield, Horace Rendall
 Markham, Arthur Basil
 Mooney, John J.
 Murphy, John
 Nannetti, Joseph P.
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)

M. Caldwell.

Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Partington, Oswald
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)

Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Rt Hn J Parker (Lanarks)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tomkinson, James

Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
White, George (Norfolk)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters (NDorset)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
Charles Douglas and Mr.
John Wilson (Durham)

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt Hon. Sir H.
Bailey, James (Waltham)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harwood-
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.)
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colomb, Rt. Hn. Sir John C. R.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley
Denay, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Dyke, Rt Hon. Sir William Hart

Fellowes, Rt Hn Ailwyn Edward
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'r'n'ss B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, S. W.)
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonberry, S.)
Gordon Maj Evans (T'r H'mlets)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry)
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heath, Sir James (Staffords NW)
Helder, Augustus
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hoult, Joseph
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N. R.)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Rt Hn. J. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (Cumb., Eskdale)
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman

Lyttelton Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (Wigt'n)
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pretzman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt Hon. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Roper, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Roids, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Skewes-Cox, Thomas

Smith, Abel H (Hertford, East)
 Smith, H C (North'mb. Tyneside)
 Stanley, Rt Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
 Stock, James Henry
 Stroyan, John
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.

Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tuff, Charles
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Walker, Col. William Hall
 Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Welby, Sir Charles G. E. (Notts.)

Whiteley, H (Ashton und. Lyne)
 Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Viscount Valentia.

MR. MCKENNA said he wished to move the insertion of the following clause—"The offspring of a marriage with a deceased wife's sister, heretofore or hereafter contracted within the realm or without, shall be deemed to be legitimate for the purpose of the payment of legacy and succession duty."

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that the proposed clause was outside the scope of the Bill, and, therefore, was out of order, as it sought to create a new class of persons, unknown to English law.

MR. MCKENNA said that on a point of order he wished to call attention to the fact that he did not propose to alter the legal *status* of the children of marriage with a deceased wife's sister; they would still remain illegitimate. All that he proposed was to amend the Inland Revenue Acts, which could be done by Resolution of the House.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that the hon. Member was not entitled to make a speech on a point of order. He had carefully considered this question, and ruled that the Amendment was outside the scope of the Bill.

MR. MCKENNA said that he bowed to the ruling of the Chairman; and he would not proceed with the new clause in regard to sugar which was on the Notice Paper.

Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."
 —(Sir A. Acland-Hood.)

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) said he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Patronage Secretary whether any effort was likely to be made to secure the reappointment soon of the Foreign Ships Regulations Committee, which sat last session. The question was very pressing, and all that was necessary was to hear the Board of Trade evidence in order to complete their Report. What he wanted was that a Report should be made by the Committee, and some action taken upon it this session.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Welling-ton) said he was sure his hon. friend would help the Government to get this Committee through in a few days.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne) asked if there was any truth in a report which had got into circulation that the Speaker had tendered his resignation?

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: No Sir; I have no knowledge of anything of the kind.

Question put, and agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 31st May, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Midland Railway Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Great Central Railway Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Dublin United Tramways Bill (by Order). As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill. Lords Amendment considered, and agreed to.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 6).

Mr. KEARLEY reported from the Committee on Group 6 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday, 26th June, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Education Acts Amendment Bill. Second Reading deferred from Wednesday, 7th June, till Thursday, 6th July.

Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

VOL. CXLVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

London Southern Tramways Bill. Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 8).

Mr. ASHTON reported from the Committee on Group 8 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Sir HENRY AUBREY - FLETCHER reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Friday, at a quarter before Twelve of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings in the House of Lords on the Second Reading of Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords], and Lautour's Divorce Bill [Lords], together with the Documents deposited in each case, be returned to the House of Lords.—(Mr. Serjeant Hemphill.)

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP I).

Sir JAMES WOODHOUSE reported from the Committee on Group I of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

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PETITIONS.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Ratho, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS (SUNDAY) BILL.

Petition from Morecambe, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HARWICH HARBOUR.

Copy presented, of Abstract of the Accounts of the Receipts and Expenditure of the Harwich Harbour Conservancy Board from the time of their incorporation down to and inclusive of the 31st March, 1905, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 182.]

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Twenty-third Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1904. Part I., General Report [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Copy presented, of Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, that they are of opinion that the Wemyss Dock Order ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 183.]

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy ordered, "of Minutes of the Proceedings of the Commissioners of National Education relating to Rule 127 (b) of their Code of Regulations."—(*Mr. Walter Long.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 184.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Laying of New Electric Cable from Whale Island to Stamshaw Lane, Portsmouth.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty was a new electric cable laid from Whale Island to Stamshaw Lane, Portsmouth, in the autumn of last year; if so, for what purpose was this cable laid; by whom was this work performed; whence were the materials for it derived; and what was the cost of the work and the materials, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Lee.*) In the autumn of last year the captain of H.M.S. "Excellent" obtained from the Naval Store Officer, Portsmouth Dockyard, a new cable to replace a worn out and defective cable connecting the Semaphore Signal at Whale Island with Stamshaw Waiting Room. The cost of the material amounted to £33 9s. 2d., and the work was carried out by the ship's company of H.M.S. "Excellent."

Homing Pigeons for use of the Navy.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, having regard to the fact that some time since the Admiralty issued invitations to owners of homing pigeons to reserve a certain number of their birds for use in time of war, or on such occasions as they might be required, will he state how many responses have been received; whether any birds have been tried; and, if any, how many, and with what result.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) Admiralty approval was given in May, 1904, for the organising of the homing pigeon fanciers of the United Kingdom into a corps of pigeon owners who would be willing, on the outbreak of war, to devote their birds to the naval service. So far upwards of 2,000 secretaries and members of flying clubs have been communicated with, with the result that some 600 members have been enrolled in the organisation. It was intended to have had a practical test of the system during the manœuvres this summer, but owing to the decision arrived at not to carry out

the manœuvres the trial has been postponed.

**Post Office on Licensed Premises at
Maghery, County Tyrone.**

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the sub-post office in Maghery is in charge of a publican; and whether, in view of this fact being a disqualification, he will instruct the postmaster at Moy, county Tyrone, to have the office removed to more suitable premises.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) I am aware of the fact to which the hon. Member calls attention. The present arrangement is a temporary one, as the office is vacant, and I am making inquiries as to the practicability of moving it to other premises.

Breaking of Cable of Barrels Lightship.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he will state if the Barrels lightship cable broke inside or outside the recently repaired portion; whether the mushroom was sighted at the time the cable was overhauled; and if the chief officer who examined the chain was the same who wrongly marked the Margareta Shoals buoy, Galway Bay.

(Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.) I am informed by the Commissioners of Irish Lights that they are unable to say where the Barrels lightship cable broke, a considerable quantity having been lost when the vessel drifted from her station. The mushroom was not sighted when the cable was overhauled. As regards the last part of the Question, I am informed by the Commissioners that the Margareta buoys have never been incorrectly marked.

Light Motor-Cars in use in Great Britain.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether an estimate can be given of the total number of light motor-cars now in use in England, Scotland, and Wales; if so, what is such estimate.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) According to the Return moved for last

year by my hon. friend the Member for the New Forest Division, up to the 1st April, 1904, 28,073 motor-cars and motor-cycles had been registered in England and Wales, and 1,903 in Scotland. I am not in a position to give an estimate of the total number now in use.

Motor-Cars—Danger Sign Posts on Roads.

MR. SOARES: To ask the President of the Local Government Board how many local authorities have caused to be set up sign posts within their areas denoting dangerous corners, cross roads, and precipitous places, pursuant to Section 2 of Clause 10 of the Motor-Car Act of 1903; and what steps the Local Government Board has taken to secure the observance of that section.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) The Local Government Board issued circulars calling the attention of the local authorities to the enactment referred to, and stated that it appeared to them that certain symbols which had been suggested for the sign posts by the County Councils Association and the Municipal Corporations Associations might conveniently be adopted. The Act does not require the local authorities to report their action in this matter to the Board, and I am not able to say how many of them have caused sign posts to be set up.

**Convictions under Section 1 (1) Motor Act
of 1903.**

MR. SOARES: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the number of convictions during the past twelve months in England under the first clause of the Motor Act of 1896; how many of such convictions were for a first offence; and how many for a second offence.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) According to information received from the police authorities of England and Wales, outside the Metropolitan police district, there were 837 convictions under Section 1 (1) of The Motor-Car Act, 1903, during the last twelve months. I am unable to state the number for that period as regards the Metropolitan police district, but I am informed that during the year 1904 there were 168 convictions under the sub-section in that district.

The Local Government Board have no information as to how many of the convictions were for first and second offences respectively.

Report of British Commercial Mission to Persia.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Report of Mr. Newcomen, the head of the British Commercial Mission to Persia, has yet been received; and, if so, whether it will be printed as a Parliamentary Paper.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The final Report of the Commercial Mission sent from India to Southern Persia has not yet been received. On its receipt, the question of presenting it to Parliament will be considered.

Statues in Westminster Hall.

MR. LYELL (Dorsetshire, E.): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, at what date the statues now in Westminster Hall were erected; and whether, in view of the historic associations of Westminster Hall, some more suitable site for them will be found.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarras.*) The statues in Westminster Hall were erected there between 1866 and 1871 under circumstances explained in House of Commons Sessional Paper 152 of 1868. The First Commissioner fears that he cannot give any pledge to find another site for them; but he will consider the matter.

Precautions against Fire in Factories and Workshops — Appointment of Select Committee.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): To ask the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury when he proposes to set up the Select Committee to inquire into the means of prevention of and escape from fire in factories, workshops, shops, warehouses, and composite buildings, to which the Home Secretary has given his assent.

(*Answered by Sir A. Acland-Hood.*) I hope to be able to set up the Select

Committee referred to by the hon. Member prior to the Whitsuntide adjournment.

Port Clerkships—Promotions from Staff of London Customs Tea and Dry Goods Accounts Office.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that, on the reorganisation of the London Customs Tea and Dry Goods Accounts Office in 1901, some eight senior abstractors of long service and Departmental experience were voluntarily transferred from the out ports to seats in the new office, carrying a £30 allowance; that, although they were recognised by their Board and the Treasury as eligible for a port clerkship, only the name of one of three seniors has been submitted to the Treasury for promotion to the lower grade of port clerkships; and that the three seniors were, six months ago, informed by their collector that the Board of Customs had accepted their names for recommendation to the Treasury for promotion; and whether he will see that these officers get the promotion which they were led to expect.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Only one of the three abstractors referred to by the hon. Member fulfilled the conditions governing promotions to the lower grade of port clerkships.

Police Band for Belfast.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Corporation of the City of Belfast made a recommendation to the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary regarding the desirability of establishing a police band for Belfast; will he say whether the Inspector-General has yet given his sanction for such; and, if not, will he explain the cause of the delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The recommendation referred to has been received by the Inspector-General, who is considering whether the exigencies of the public service will permit of the establishment of a police band for Belfast. A definite reply cannot yet be given.

Sanitary Condition of Killyleagh, County Down.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that complaints have been repeatedly made by the inhabitants of Killyleagh, county Down, regarding the insanitary condition of their homes and the inferior supply of pure water for domestic purposes; and what action, if any, does he propose taking to remedy this state of affairs.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) In February, 1902, the rural district council forwarded to the Local Government Board particulars of proposed works for the water supply of Killyleagh, and the Board fixed an area of charge for the cost of the works. So far as the Board are aware, no steps have since been taken by the council to provide the water supply, but as no formal complaint in the matter has been received the Board are unable to take action under Section 15 of the Public Health Act of 1896.

Delay in Holding Court-Martial on Quartermaster-Sergeant Allen (Northampton Regiment).

DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that Quartermaster-Sergeant Allen of the Northampton Regiment, who was acquitted by Court-martial on the 13th April last of charges of falsifying accounts, was under arrest for seven weeks before being brought to trial, although a man of good character and with no previous charge against him, and that the Court-martial was not held till more than five weeks after the charges were drafted and sent to headquarters; and whether he can give the reason for such delay, especially in a military judicial proceeding.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.) In the first place, owing to the complicated character of the case, the General Officer Commanding found it necessary to make several references to the Judge Advocate-General before the charges could be framed. On the 11th March the application was submitted to the War Office. The subsequent delay was due to the employment of counsel

on both sides and the necessary arrangements involved thereby.

Annuities for Crimean Veterans—Case of Ex-Sergeant-Major John O'Connor.

MR. HATCH (Lancashire, Gorton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the medals and annuities for distinguished or meritorious service have yet been issued to all the Crimean veterans; and, if not, whether, in view of the services of these old soldiers and the fact that many of them are in straitened circumstances and feeble health, he will give instructions for the immediate issue of the medal to at least all ex-non-commissioned officers, notably to John O'Connor, late sergeant-major and military clerk, late of the 63rd Manchester Regiment, whose case has on several occasions been commended to the favourable notice of the War Office by high officers.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.) The amount allotted for annuities being limited, such rewards can only be given as vacancies occur. The grant is confined to soldiers or ex-soldiers above the rank of corporal, who must be recommended by the officers commanding the regiments to which they belonged. Since 1st April, 1904, when the sum allowed for these rewards was increased, forty-nine Crimean veterans have been granted the annuity and medal, but there are still several recommended who have not yet been provided for. Special consideration is, however, given to their cases when annuities fall vacant, due regard being had to the amount of the grant held by the corps to which they belonged. Sergeant-Major John O'Connor was granted an annuity of £10 from 1st April, 1904, with a medal for meritorious service.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Ragging on H.M.S. "Kent."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty can he explain why the midshipman of His Majesty's ship "Kent" who fired at and wounded his superior officer was allowed to withdraw from the service; was any Court-martial held upon the

midshipman in question, or was any punishment inflicted upon him; does the Board of Admiralty hold that in cases where an officer of the Fleet has used a lethal weapon against another officer, the Admiralty have power to dispense with a Court-martial and thus to render impossible the punishment prescribed by the Naval Discipline Act; and, if so, does this apply to men as well as to officers.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg also to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty can he state for what reason the midshipman of H.M.S. "Kent," who shot the sub-lieutenant, had been threatened to be clobbered or beaten; was it for a breach of the King's Regulations; had this midshipman ever been clobbered before, and had he been bullied by his fellow officers; was the sub-lieutenant, who was shot, in uniform and in the execution of his office at the time; has he received a hurt certificate; and will he be entitled to any compensation for his wounds.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): With regard to the hon. Member's two Questions, I have nothing to add to the statements made in the House on May 18th† in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for South Donegal, and subsequently in debate.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Do the Admiralty propose to allow officers of the Fleet to fire at and wound superior officers and then be withdrawn from the service without Court-martial? Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this is destructive of the whole discipline of the Fleet?

MR. PRETYMAN: In this matter there are three parties concerned—the officer injured and his friends, the officer who inflicted the injury and his friends, and the naval service. Neither of the first two parties, I am in a position to state, desires, from their point of view, that this matter should be further dragged before the public. The third interest, and the most important—that of the naval service—has been most care-

fully considered by the Admiralty, and the action taken has been taken with due regard to the interests of the service. The interests of the service would, in their opinion, suffer and not gain if any further details were dragged before the public.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I really must press this. Is the discipline of the naval service to be subjected to the desires of persons implicated in affairs of this sort?

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): Why try to hush up the scandal?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Does the hon. Member remember that in November last a boy was sentenced to twenty-four strokes of the birch for striking his superior officer? Is there one law for the rich and another for the poor? Is a midshipman to be allowed to shoot his superior officer with impunity while a boy who strikes his officer is punished?

MR. PRETYMAN: A few days ago the hon. Member was justifying this act.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: And I think the Admiralty have justified my action by not bringing up this boy for trial to show what provocation he received.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that he should put down another Question, and, if he did not get a better Answer, he should take the appropriate course.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I wish to ask the Home Secretary whether he will put down for to-morrow or to-morrow week the Vote for the salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty or some other Vote on which I can call attention to the refusal of the Admiralty to explain why they have allowed a midshipman who fired at his superior officer and shot him through the cheek to retire from the service without being Court-martialled?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): It is generally understood that to-morrow will

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlvi., 748

be devoted to the Local Government Board Vote. The hon. Member had better consult through the usual channels as to the best means of getting the discussion he asks for.

Royal Engineer Commissions for Woolwich Cadets.

MR. TUFF (Rochester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether arrangements will be made to secure for the cadets who will be leaving the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, in July next, the average number of commissions in the Royal Engineers.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The number of commissions to be given to the Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery is based, from time to time, on the requirements of the service, and no hard-and-fast proportion can be laid down. As far as can be seen the numbers in July will be about one-third of the cadets to the Royal Engineers and two-thirds to the Royal Artillery.

Witchcraft in Gloucestershire.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the practice of witchcraft at May Hill and other parts of Gloucester; whether he is aware that, in the case of a family named Markey, four members last week lost their reason and one attempted to commit suicide at a place called Blakeley, as a result of these practices; and whether, in view of the alarm in the locality, he can state what action will be taken by the authorities to suppress witchcraft.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have made inquiry into this very curious case. I find that Markey and his wife consulted a supposed witch about some money which they believed to have been stolen, and that subsequently three members of the family became insane, while the wife left the house and remained concealed in a wood for nearly four days. If sufficient evidence is forthcoming to justify a prosecution, proceedings will be taken by the local police against the woman who was consulted.

Docking Horses' Tails.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the speech delivered at Northampton on Friday by the Duke of Grafton, where his Grace condemned as fearful cruelty the practice prevalent in London and throughout England of docking horses' tails and pulling out the hairs by the roots; and whether he can state if instructions will be issued to the police to prosecute in such cases.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have not seen any report of the speech referred to. In the case of cruelty to a horse it is open to anyone to prosecute under the Cruelty to Animals Act 1849. I have no reason to think that any special instructions to the police are necessary.

Malicious Injury to Horses at Solihull.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any complaints have lately been made by farmers in the neighbourhood of Solihull as to the cutting of the tails of their horses; and, if so, whether any effort has been made to trace the authors of these crimes.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have made inquiry from the local police and find that the manes and tails of three horses in the neighbourhood were cut on the night of the 19th instant, and that a man was arrested on the following day and is now in custody on the charge of having committed these offences.

Old Bailey Calendar.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he can state the total number of charges preferred at the present sessions at the Old Bailey, and the number under each of these headings: murder, attempts to murder, manslaughter, forgery, coining, conspiracy, robbing, and indecency; and how often these sessions are held.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have no official information on this subject, but I may refer the hon. Member to the summary of the Central Criminal Court Calendar which was given in *The Times*

of yesterday (May 30th), where figures are given as to the offences to be tried. The Central Criminal Court holds twelve sessions in each year.

MR. MACVEAGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that more serious crimes are investigated at one sessions of the Old Bailey than are committed in all Ireland in one year?

[No Answer was returned.]

The Greenwich Murder.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that a cripple named Bowring was murdered at Greenwich on Saturday; and whether the police have obtained any clue as to the perpetrator of the crime.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The person who is supposed to have perpetrated this crime is in custody.

Doncaster Crime.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of *Rex versus Walter Webb*, at Doncaster, on May 20th, who was charged with a criminal assault on a girl thirteen years old, when the mother of prosecutrix was also charged with procuring the girl; and will he introduce legislation to secure that such trials shall be heard in camera.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: If, as appears to be the case, the hon. Member refers to the preliminary investigation of a charge by magistrates acting under the Indictable Offences Act, 1848 (11 and 12 Victoria, cap. 42, Section 19) the question whether that investigation should be conducted in public or not is one for the discretion of the magistrates. I should not be in favour of fettering that discretion by an Act of Parliament.

Monastic Institutions and the Death Duties.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether application is made

by the Inland Revenue authorities for payment of estate and succession duties on the death of individuals who held property for monastic and conventual institutions on undeclared trusts.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The Inland Revenue would claim estate and succession duties on property held by a deceased person on trust for a Roman Catholic monastic institution where they had evidence of property being so held. In the case of a community of nuns, the death of a trustee would not give rise to any claim for death duties.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask whether these institutions pay corporation duty?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I must ask for notice of that.

Return of Public Income and Expenditure.

***SIR HENRY FOWLER** (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer why, in the Return of the gross public income and expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1905, the income from Excise is stated at £30,750,000, and from Estate Duties at £12,350,000, but in the financial statement presented to the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer the income from Excise Duty is stated at £36,066,000 and the income from Estate Duties is stated at £16,669,000; and why, in the Return, the payments to Local Taxation Accounts are stated at only £1,156,867 when they really were £9,696,000.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Public Income and Expenditure Account, to which the right hon. Gentleman refers in his Question as the Return, is prepared under the Sinking Fund Act, 1875. That Act requires that it shall be "an Account of the Public Income and Expenditure of the United Kingdom according to the actual receipt and issue of moneys on the Exchequer Account." It cannot, therefore, include the receipts of revenue which under various Acts are paid direct by the Revenue Departments

to the Local Taxation Accounts, and do not pass through the Account of the Exchequer. The Financial Statement which is presented to the House in connection with the Budget is prepared for the convenience of Members, so as to show the aggregate revenue raised by the State, including the revenue paid to the Local Taxation Accounts as well as that paid to the Exchequer Account. The receipts under the two heads are distinguished, and the Exchequer figures as there shown agree with those which the right hon. Gentleman quotes from the Return. As regards the sum of £1,156,000 about which the right hon. Gentleman inquires, that sum only represents the amount paid in pursuance of statutes from the Consolidated Fund to the Local Taxation Accounts; and it necessarily does not include the sums paid direct to those Accounts out of the assigned revenues which are given at page 2 of the Statement (Parliamentary Paper 119) as amounting to £9,813,000, making the aggregate amount with which the Local Taxation Accounts are credited up to £10,970,000 (in round thousands).

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: May I ask whether there is any distinction in the receipt of this money as between the revenue and the Exchequer. The death duty levied on an estate is paid in one lump sum to the revenue, and allocated afterwards. It becomes part of the gross public income.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has observed that the Return has to be prepared to show the actual receipt and issue of moneys on the Exchequer Account. This money never reaches the Exchequer Account; it is intercepted beforehand. Therefore, a statement which is to show only what is paid into or out of the Exchequer Account could not include that item. Accordingly, the Return is not a complete statement of the money raised by Imperial taxation, as I made clear in my Budget statement.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: Would it not be more convenient if one form of accounts were adopted. At present there is a great difference of opinion as to what

the taxation of the country is. Differences of ten millions constantly occur in the debates in this House. Has not the time arrived when, week by week, a proper, intelligible, accurate statement should be presented to the country?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I think it would be a great convenience if all parties could agree on a single form in which the accounts should be presented, in tead of having separate Returns moved for by individual Members who all desire the figures presented in a different form. At present I am under a statutory obligation, by the Act of 1875, to present the particular Return to which the right hon. Gentleman objects, and if that were adopted as the only form it would be open to the objection of being incomplete.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the Chancellor of the Exchequer aware that the vicious process of interception, by which £20,000,000 is withdrawn from the account, was not introduced until after the Act of 1875. In consequence of the interception of that money, can he not consider the propriety of introducing some Bill to amend the present form of accounts?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have just carried one Bill through its Committee stage, and there is another Bill I have promised. The prospect of adding another amending Bill to these has no great attraction for me at this moment. The fact that the interception of revenue has taken place since 1875 does not dispense me from presenting this Parliamentary Return.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would undertake to accept a recommendation of the Public Accounts Committee on the subject.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Clearly I cannot say beforehand what my attitude would be to proposals which have not yet been submitted. Any recommendation from the Committee as to the form in which public accounts are presented will have my most serious consideration. The hon. Gentleman the Member for

King's Lynn holds strong views as to the particular forms which should be used, but others consider them the most misleading that could be adopted.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: My request has reference to the accounts presented weekly and published in the newspapers, which are not presented under the Act and are in the entire discretion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir William Harcourt, when Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced his intention of making the alteration, and the officials of the Department must have known that he would have done so if he had not been ejected from office.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I was not aware of that, nor did I understand that that was the point of the right hon. Gentleman's later Question. I will consider the matter. As far as my experience goes, the weekly Returns of revenue and expenditure seem to give rise to more misunderstanding than possibly any other Returns. It not infrequently happens, from the anxiety of the Government to give full information to the public, that they give information which the public are unable to digest. I am not at all certain that any good purpose is served by making these Returns at all.

Local Government Accounts.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Departmental Committee to consider the practicability of a standard form of accounts being prescribed for local authorities has been appointed; whether it has taken any evidence on the subject; and whether it is intended to take the opinion of professional accountants in accordance with the recommendation of the Joint Select Committee on Municipal Trading.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The Committee has not at present been appointed; but the matter is receiving my attention and the appointment will be made as early as practicable. The Committee will no doubt take evidence from professional accountants.

MR. COHEN: Much the same Answer was given so far back as March 7th†.

Southwark Burial Scandal.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that the local authority in Southwark allowed a child named Campbell to lie unburied and uncoffined for sixteen days after death, and that the father was refused facilities for the burial until he had worked two days breaking stones for the guardians, although the mother was starving; and whether the Local Government Board has taken, or intends to take, any action in the matter.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I have seen a newspaper report of the case referred to, and I am making inquiries with regard to it.

Outbreak of Glanders at Fulham.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he has considered the circumstances disclosed at the inquest held on May 20th on George Charles Nichols, a horsekeeper of the Andrew Star Omnibus Company, Fulham, who was found to have died of acute glanders, and, further, the recommendation of the jury that veterinary inspectors ought to have power to compulsorily apply the Mallein test to in-contact animals with a view to stamp out this disease; whether he is aware that in one London hospital only no less than seven similar fatal cases to man have been diagnosed; whether he is aware that out of sixteen recently purchased Australian horses in the same omnibus stud twelve have been found to have glanders; and whether, having regard to these circumstances, he will take the necessary steps to have the Mallein test compulsorily applied to all in-contact animals in case of outbreaks of glanders, and to provide a full veterinary inspection and the application of the Mallein test in the case of horses imported from Australia or any country in which glanders is prevalent or suspected.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 575.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES, Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): I have received from the London County Council full information as to the results of their inquiries into the regrettable circumstances to which the hon. Member refers. Although it is a fact that the horses reacting to the Mallein test in this case were of Australian origin, it is not by any means clear that the horses were affected with glanders when imported, and it seems on the whole more likely that they contracted the disease since their purchase in London in January last. The desirability of amending the Glanders Order in the direction indicated is a subject which is receiving my careful consideration, but there are difficulties, both administrative and financial, in the way of the compulsory adoption of the Mallein test in connection with outbreaks of glanders which I have not so far seen my way to overcome. I am at the same time making inquiries with a view to deciding whether any action can usefully be taken in the direction of controlling the importation of horses into this country. I have not before me the information referred to by the hon. Member with regard to one of the London hospitals, but the London County Council have been good enough to inform me that during the last five years twelve cases of human deaths from glanders have been brought to their notice, in six of which a connection was traced to outbreaks of that disease in horses.

MR. CHANNING: I shall put another Question on this subject.

The Scottish Churches Dispute Bill.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what day before Whitsuntide the Bill dealing with the Scottish Churches will be introduced, in accordance with the undertaking given by the Prime Minister.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I understand it is the intention of my right hon. friend to introduce this Bill next week—probably on Wednesday.

Outrages on Children in Glasgow.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether his attention has been called to the outrages perpetrated on children at Rutherglen, Glasgow, last week; whether he can communicate to the House the contents of the police reports on these outrages; whether any hope is entertained of the recovery of the victims; and whether any arrests have been made.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): The Procurator-Fiscal has reported to me that on Thursday 25th instant, about noon, two boys aged respectively nine years and three years and eleven months had been stabbed near Rutherglen—the former was only slightly cut on the back and is now going about, the latter was mortally wounded and died the following night. The person who is believed to have committed the outrages was apprehended on the following day and has been charged with murder.

Sale of the Caldbeck Estate, Queen's County.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received a protest from Mrs. Mary Anne Wall, Ballacolla, Queen's County, a tenant on the Caldbeck Estate, against being included amongst the tenants who signed agreements to purchase, and alleging her signature to an agreement to purchase, forwarded to the Estates Commissioners on behalf of the vendor, to be a forgery; and, if so, will he say what course he proposes taking in this matter.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL, Dublin University): No, Sir; but an agreement to purchase signed by James Wall has been lodged, and Mrs. Wall has sent in an objection, stating that she, and not James Wall, is the tenant. This objection will be inquired into before the sale is sanctioned.

Irish Agricultural Department.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of

Ireland whether, since it has been represented that the scale of remuneration proper to their grade is paid to the Catholic gentlemen of the Agricultural Department who have eleven years service, perform high class work, viz., the conducting of registries, the interviewing of callers, and the drafting and writing of correspondence, and have salaries of only £97 10s. a year, he will state what was the scale of salary originally fixed by the Treasury as proper for the grade of chief clerk in the Department; has such original amount since been exceeded; and, if so, by how much; and on what principle did the Department exceed the scale at first considered adequate for the position.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL: My right hon. and learned friend replied to a similar Question put by the hon. Member on March 14th.† I have nothing to add to that reply.

The Irish Police and the Gaelic League.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the police are endeavouring to treat as criminal the operations of the Gaelic League, which has for its object the advancement and propagation of the Irish language; how many of the branches of the league have been visited by the police; and whether the discovery of anything of an incriminating character has resulted from such visits.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): It is not the fact that the police are endeavouring to treat as criminal the operations of the Gaelic League, nor, so far as the Inspector-General is aware, have any branches of that organisation been visited by the police.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: Has any special order been issued to the police about the league?

MR. WALTER LONG: Not that I am aware of.

Alleged Wrongful Arrest at Derrybrien.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state on what grounds Timothy Fallon, of Derrybrien, county Galway, was arrested by the police and brought before a magistrate; whether T. Fallon was subsequently summoned for the same alleged offence; and whether the charge was dismissed unanimously by the magistrates.

MR. WALTER LONG: An action for false imprisonment has been instituted against the constable who made this arrest, and I must decline to make any statement on the subject while the case is *sub judice*.

Police Searches for Firearms in Ulster.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when the last search for arms was made in Belfast, Lurgan, Portadown, or Derry; and whether firearms are not frequently used during disturbances in these districts.

MR. WALTER LONG: The last search for arms was made in Belfast in 1886, and in Londonderry in 1888. No searches have been made in Lurgan or Portadown. Shots have been fired by both Parties in the North of Ireland; fortunately, however, serious results have rarely followed, but the practice is none the less reprehensible. Detection is difficult in such cases, but the police use their best endeavours to bring offenders to justice.

MR. DILLON: Can the right hon. Gentleman explain why searches are made in Roscommon, where arms are not used, but are not made in the North of Ireland, where arms are used?

MR. WALTER LONG: I must ask for notice of that.

Irish National Education—Mr. Dale's Report.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now say that he will lay upon the Table of the House the comments on Mr. Dale's Report sent

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 1389.

in to the Government by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland and referred to by the Commissioners in their last annual Report.

MR. WALTER LONG: The last published Annual Report of the Commissioners embodies substantially, and in considerable detail, their general observations on Mr. Dale's Report. The communications from the Commissioners which contain these observations are incomplete in themselves, since they make references to previous correspondence of a Departmental and confidential character that passed between the Irish Government and the Commissioners. For this reason I am unable to lay on the Table their observations as a separate Paper.

Mr. Charles O'Connor's Floughena (Mayo) Estate.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the estate of Mr. Charles O'Connor, of Floughena, in county Mayo, has been brought before the Estates Commissioners for sale to the tenants; and, if so, what steps have been taken by the Commissioners to meet the claim for reinstatement of the representatives of Thomas Durkan, who was evicted from a farm on this estate.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir; but if the estate should come before the Commissioners, they will consider an application for reinstatement which has been received from Mary Durkan.

Case of Constable Anderson.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table the official Minutes and Correspondence connected with the case of Constable Anderson which Lords Cadogan and Spencer asked to be made public.

MR. DILLON: I beg further to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will let the hon. Member for Mayo East have a full attested copy of the evidence given at the public Court of inquiry on which Constable Anderson was dismissed from the Irish Constabulary.

MR. WALTER LONG: I desire to remind the hon. Member that my predecessor the right hon. Member for Dover, on the 13th July† and 3rd August‡ last, declined to lay these documents on the Table of the House. I fully accept my right hon. friend's decision in this matter, and am, moreover, unable to act on the suggestion in the second Question that an attested copy of the evidence taken at the Court of inquiry should be supplied to the hon. Member.

MR. DILLON: Then do I understand that the right hon. Gentleman will not allow us to see the evidence?

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, I think that is the result of my Answer to the Question.

The Irish Executive and the Estates Commissioners.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the pledge given by the hon. Member for Dover, on July 1st, 1903; and whether, in pursuance of that pledge, he will not publish the instructions and orders to the Estates Commissioners contained in the letters received by them from the Irish Executive, and which instructions and orders are referred to in the Report of the Commissioners as controlling their action equally with the Act of Parliament.

MR. WALTER LONG: The statement made by my right hon. friend on the occasion referred to was that "he had not yet decided on the exact form of publication, but he agreed that the regulations should come before the House in some way." The regulations in question were those which are provided for by Section 23, Sub-section 8, of the Act. As I have already repeatedly stated, no such regulations have yet been made.

MR. DILLON: Did the right hon. Gentleman, in making the promise to the House, refer to any proposal to issue secret regulations?

† See (4) *Debates*, cxxxvii., 1485.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxxxix. 724.

MR. WALTER LONG: So far as I am aware, no secret regulations have been made. There have been communications between the Estates Commissioners and the Government, but these are always treated as confidential. I have promised, and intend to keep the promise, to lay the regulations on the Table as soon as possible.

MR. DILLON: Was it not the impression of the House, on July 1st, 1903, that all orders and regulations issued by the Irish Executive to the Estates Commissioners should be laid on the Table?

MR. WALTER LONG: I cannot possibly say what the impression of the House was. My right hon. friend promised that the regulations, when issued, should be published. None have yet been issued, but they will shortly be issued, as they are now practically complete. I have done my best to hasten their publication, but they deal with questions of great difficulty and delicacy, and it is necessary that they should be very carefully drawn. I certainly have issued no secret regulations.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what are the reasons for keeping secret the instructions and orders contained in the letters received by the Estates Commissioners; and whether the Irish Government propose to continue the practice of issuing secret instructions and orders to the Estates Commissioners.

MR. WALTER LONG: Sir, the reason is that these memoranda were of a Departmental and confidential character. I may repeat what I have already more than once stated, that inasmuch as the Department of the Estates Commissioners is a branch of the Executive Government, communications of a Departmental character must necessarily pass from time to time between the Commissioners and the Government, which, like all other communications of an inter-Departmental character, are treated as confidential, in accordance with well-established practice, and, as such, will not be published. The issue of instructional orders or regulations of the nature contemplated by

statute is, however, on a different footing, and I have already undertaken to lay such regulations, when settled, on the Table of the House.

MR. DILLON: That is not a sufficient Answer to my Question whether the Government propose to continue the practice of issuing secret regulations?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have stated that I am not aware that the Government has issued secret orders. Communications are always passing between the Executive and different branches of the Government, but secret orders have not, to the best of my knowledge, been issued, and certainly not by me.

MR. DILLON: The Attorney-General said that in the correspondence with the Commissioners there were contained instructions and orders; and they must be secret because you refuse to communicate them to the House.

MR. WALTER LONG: The word "instructions" may be interpreted in different ways. As far as I know, nothing in the nature of regulations governing the general action of the Commissioners has been issued by the Government. When the Commissioners applied to the Government in regard to the administration of the Act, the Government, as in duty bound, gave advice; but it is the invariable practice to regard such communications as confidential.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Then are we to understand that for eighteen months the Land Act has been worked on the basis of communications with the Executive Government?

MR. WALTER LONG: The hon. Member can understand what he likes. I cannot alter my Answer that no regulations have yet been issued. As soon as regulations are issued they will be laid on the Table; and I undertake that they shall not be altered or varied except by new regulations, which will also be laid on the Table.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): But the Commissioners in their Report refer to regulations overruling them.

Are we not entitled to see those regulations?

MR. WALTER LONG: I should say no, Sir. That is not the question we are now speaking of—namely, the issue of regulations for the general instruction of the Commissioners. They will be issued, and as soon as they are ready they will be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. DILLON: I wish to submit a point of order. I wish to ask whether we are not entitled to obtain from the Government the instructions which are referred to in the Report of the Estates Commissioners submitted to the House of Commons. We have been informed by the Attorney-General for Ireland that these instructions were contained in written letters. We were assured in this House that we should have full information to enable us to criticise the Report of the Commissioners.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) said that his observation referred only to the evicted tenants' question.

MR. DILLON: That is a most important admission. We now know that written instructions were given in reference to the action of the Commissioners in regard to reinstating the evicted tenants. We have the Report of the Commissioners stating that their operations were controlled by the instructions they received. Are we not entitled to obtain from the Government those instructions referred to in the Report?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not think that is a question of order. It is a matter for argument in debate, but there is no authority in the Chair to compel the production of these instructions.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Is it not the practice that a Minister cannot quote from a document without producing it? Are we not entitled to have this document produced?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not think there has been any quotation from it in this House.

MR. DILLON: Certainly; it is quoted in the Report of the Commissioners.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: It is not a question of quotation by a Minister, I admit. It is a quotation of a document by the Estates Commissioners in their Report, and I submit that the same rule applies to this as to quotations by Ministers.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I do not think the rule can be carried as far as that. The rule is a well-ascertained one. If a Minister in this House quotes for the purposes of argument one or more sentences from a document he is bound to produce the whole document.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: In this case a Minister has presented to the House a Report in which reference is made to other documents. I say that the rule therefore applies.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: In the Report of the Estates Commissioners, who are responsible to and controlled by this House, there is a distinct reference to the instructions received by them from the Government. The Attorney-General says he gave the advice to the Government on which the Commissioners acted. I think we ought to have the whole case before us.

MR. DILLON: The Commissioners say that their proceedings under Section 23 have been regulated by the provisional rules and the instructions received from time to time from his Excellency the Lord-Lieutenant. Yet Ministers tell us no instructions have been given. I think we are entitled, at any rate, to an explanation of this extraordinary contradiction between Ministers and the statement in the Report presented to the House by the Estates Commissioners.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I see no reason for altering my decision. There has been no quotation by a Minister from a particular document, and the rule only applies to that.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): Surely the action of the Commissioners up to

the present must have been regulated by some instructions, and if we are entitled to have the regulations which are now in preparation to regulate the action of the Commissioners in the future, we are equally entitled to have those by which they have been regulated in the past.

MR. WALTER LONG: And my answer is that there have been no regulations issued as contemplated by the Act up to the present, but there have been constant communications between the Executive and the Commissioners, and it would be an unheard-of departure from practice to disclose such communications.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Then does the right hon. Gentleman wish the Estates Commissioners to correct their Report?

[No Answer was returned.]

Crookstown Labourers' Cottages.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on the representation of Denis Healy, of Lower Belmont, Crookstown, the Bandon Rural District Council caused a cottage with an acre of land attached to be built on the lands of Mrs. Henry Wall, Crookstown; and will he say if possession of this cottage has been given over to Healy; if not, what proceedings have been taken by the district council in connection with its occupation, and has any tenancy been declared.

MR. WALTER LONG: Healy was one of four labourers who made representations for this cottage. At the local inquiry Mrs. Wall offered to give the site provided that another of the four, named Callaghan, who was a labourer in her employment, should get the cottage; and this offer was accepted by the district council.

Protection of Irish Agricultural Interests in England.

MR. JOYCE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many public bodies in Ireland have forwarded resolutions asking for the appointment

of an Irish Commissioner in England to look after Irish agricultural interests, in the same manner as Denmark and Sweden does, and what answer has been given to those requests.

MR. WALTER LONG: Resolutions have been received from eight public bodies, and formal acknowledgments have been sent. The Department's transit inspectors visit the principal British markets, interview merchants engaged in the sale of Irish and foreign produce, and make inquiries generally as to the marketing of the produce.

Technical and Agricultural Grants to Kerry.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the amount contributed by the Congested Districts Board for the purpose of technical or agricultural schemes in the county of Kerry in the year 1904-5; and if he can give the names of the schemes assisted by such grants, and the amount allowed to each scheme.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have forwarded to the hon. Member a statement giving in detail the information asked for.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction made grants to any persons in the county of Kerry in the year 1904-5, other than to the County Council of Kerry; and, if so, what were the amounts of such grants and to whom were they given.

MR. WALTER LONG: No grants for agricultural or technical instruction were made by the Department out of their endowment fund to persons in Kerry, other than the county committee, in the year 1904-5.

Ulster Members and Crime in Ireland.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Lord Ashtown, county Galway, issued a circular last February

calling upon his friends to form an association for the purpose of collecting information *re* boycotting and agrarian offences, to be supplied to the Ulster Tory Members, and asking for funds to promote same; that about two weeks ago Lord Ashtown purchased the estate of the late Mr. Galway, upon which eighteen tenants are living, upon an average valuation of £2 10s. each; that there is a considerable amount of untenanted land upon the estate, and that the tenants sought to buy; and whether, in view of the provisions of the Land Act of 1903, he will say what steps, if any, the Executive intend to take to extend the benefits of the Act to those tenants and prevent such occurrences in future.

MR. WALTER LONG: I am not aware that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. I am informed that the Land Judge has expressed his intention of accepting Lord Ashtown's offer for the purchase of the estate referred to. The tenants opposed the acceptance of this offer, but, as the estate was unencumbered, and as no receiver over it had ever been appointed, the learned Judge held that the compulsory provisions of the Act of 1896 were not applicable. The number of tenants is, I understand, correctly stated; their holdings are small, and there is a considerable amount of untenanted land which it has been the practice to let for grazing. The learned Judge was satisfied that for at least two years past the letting of this grazing land has been boycotted by the tenants. No action on the part of the Executive is called for.

The Vote of Censure.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I beg to ask the Home Secretary whether he can hold out any prospect that the House will soon see the Prime Minister again in his place and what arrangements the Government contemplate for the Motion standing in the name of my right hon. friend the Member for Berwick.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have seen the Prime Minister this morning, and I am in a position to offer the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick Monday next for the vote of censure.

My right hon. friend the Secretary for the Treasury promised on Monday last that the earliest possible day should be given. Monday is that earliest day, and I shall be ready to place that day at the disposal of the right hon. Gentleman. With regard to the first Question which the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition asked me, I have every reason to hope that my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury will be in his place to-morrow.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: At the time when the Secretary for the Treasury spoke of fixing the earliest possible day, I remember I suggested that the convenience of the House should be consulted; and I am bound to say that, while I think any day this week would have been suitable, I do not think any day next week is likely to be convenient for the great majority of Members of the House. Therefore I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider the matter and make other arrangements.

MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I have carefully considered the question with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, and I am afraid I can offer no other day than Monday next. I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman the objections to the postponement. The character of the Motion is exceptional. It is not an ordinary Motion; it is a direct vote of censure upon the Prime Minister, and ought to be dealt with as speedily as possible. [OPPOSITION cries of "To-morrow."] The right hon. Gentleman himself treated the matter as one of urgent public importance, because he moved the adjournment of the House on this question last week. Therefore, so far as I am concerned as representing the Prime Minister on this occasion, I am afraid I can hold out no hope of any day before the holidays except Monday next.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I greatly regret the tone in which the right hon. Gentleman has thought fit to deal with this matter, which ought to be a matter of amicable arrangement between the two sides of the House. The arrangements of hon. Members were made on the supposition that this Motion was to come on last Tuesday, and therefore

many hon. Members have made arrangements to go out of town next week. There are other circumstances which have occurred which increase the tendency in that direction; but if the right hon. Gentleman wishes to have an early day why does he not select to-morrow? We are ready to go on with it to-morrow if the right hon. Gentleman will give us that day, and not select a day next week which will be notoriously inconvenient.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: First of all let me apologise if in any way my manner gave the impression that I had answered the Question of the right hon. Gentleman in any discourteous spirit.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There was no discourtesy. It was the words of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: It certainly was not my intention to be discourteous. I said I had every reason to hope that my right hon. friend would be present to-morrow; but I cannot guarantee his presence to-morrow, and therefore I cannot fix that day in the absence of my right hon. friend, who is the Minister challenged and who must reply to this question. So far as the day for the Motion is concerned I am afraid I cannot depart from the offer I have made.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman appears to forget that it is not our fault that it did not come off yesterday.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am perfectly certain there is no person in the House or in the country who more deeply regrets that it did not come off yesterday than the Prime Minister himself.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): I am not quite clear how the matter stands now with reference to the proposal of the Government as to a day for the Motion. Do I understand that the Home Secretary states that the Motion must be taken on Monday or not at all, and that the Government will not give any other day? Because the Leader of the Opposition has

pointed out that that is an inconvenient day. More than one unforeseen cause has occurred to disturb the course of public business since my Motion was put on the Paper. Do I understand from the Home Secretary that the position of the Government is that they offer us Monday, but meet us with a point blank refusal as to any later day?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have already pointed out that it is very desirable that the Motion should be dealt with before the vacation, because I do not think that a Motion challenging the *bona fides* of the Prime Minister ought to remain on the Paper for a long period. If the right hon. Gentleman would take the Motion off the Paper I daresay my right hon. friend would at a later period give the right hon. Gentleman another opportunity. At all events, Monday is the first day at our disposal; and whether the Motion should be postponed till after Whitsuntide is a question which the right hon. Gentleman should put to the Prime Minister.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I gather from the Home Secretary that the main difficulty of appointing another day, assuming it is impossible to take the Motion this week, is the matter of form of keeping the Motion on the Paper. I should be willing to remove the Motion provided I should be regarded as at liberty to replace it when the Government can offer a day which will suit the general convenience of the House.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am as anxious for the general convenience as right hon. Gentlemen opposite; but all I can say now is that I can only offer Monday before the Whitsun holidays. If the right hon. Gentleman desires to take the course he has adumbrated perhaps he will put a further Question to-morrow or on the adjournment to-night.

Report of Sir W. Butler's Commission.

SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department a Question of which I have sent him private notice, viz., whether it is a fact that the Report of Sir William Butler's Commission which the Secretary of State for War presented

to the Public Accounts Committee was presented as a confidential document, and whether there is any reason why the contents of the Report should not at once be made public to the House and the country.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I see no reason at all why this Paper should not be laid, but as a matter of courtesy I should first like to consult the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It was said by the Secretary for War the other day that presenting the Report to the Public Accounts Committee was tantamount to presenting it to the House. Why, then, is the House not in possession of it? The proper course in a matter of this sort is to present the Papers to the House first and then for the House to refer them to the Public Accounts Committee.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Perhaps I may be allowed to explain. The Committee on Public Accounts desired that the Report should be presented as soon as possible, and as soon as it was received it was presented to the Committee. But the printing of the evidence on which the Report is based has not yet been completed, and I thought it would be in accordance with all precedent that the Report and the evidence should be presented at the same time. The printing of the evidence is now so far advanced that we shall be practically able to present both the Report and the evidence either to-morrow or the day after.

AN HON. MEMBER: After the Whitby election!

SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall), as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, said that he personally could see no reason why the Report, a copy of which had been supplied to each member of the Public Accounts Committee, should not be presented to the House. The Committee had not been able to commence their inquiry into the alleged scandals because they had not yet had the evidence. So far as the Committee were concerned, they had no objection

to the Report and the evidence being placed before the House, and he had asked the members of the Committee not to make public the Report until it had been presented to the House.

SIR HENRY FOWLER asked the Secretary for War under what authority he had referred this document to the Public Accounts Committee, marking it "Confidential?"

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that in marking the document "Confidential" I had no intention whatever to withdraw it from the cognisance of the House. That is the ordinary inscription placed on documents emanating from the War Office. It is not a question of withholding the document from the House, but a question of the rapidity of printing.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Then there would be no objection to any member of the Committee handing a copy to the Press?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: That is not a matter on which I should like to express any opinion. I can see no objection if any members of the Committee think it part of their duty. I think it is better that the Report and the evidence should be presented at the same time, and I do not see that the public advantage would be served by accelerating the presentation of the Report by a couple of days.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that it would be proper on the part of a member of the Committee to hand his copy to the Press? I should strongly object to such a proceeding.

SIR A. HAYTER: I think it would be much better that this matter should be left until the evidence is printed.

MR. GODDARD (Ipswich) asked whether the word "Confidential" on a document did not mean that a member of the Committee was precluded from showing the document to other Members of the House?

MR. BLAKE expressed a strong hope that the invariable rule of the Public Accounts Committee that all documents that came before it should be regarded as confidential should not be departed from in this case. It would be a great misfortune if it were. He might add that six or eight weeks ago the Committee foresaw difficulty with regard to the evidence and asked the War Office to get it printed from day to day, so that there might be no delay in its correction.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER entirely agreed with the hon. Gentleman. The circumstances were that the Chairman of the Committee asked him to forward him a copy of the Report and he did so, and he thought that necessarily involved sending a copy to the other members of the Committee. As to the propriety of his action, it seemed to him in accordance with the general view of the House that these documents should be regarded as confidential. The delay in presenting the evidence was due, not to printing, but to the correction of proofs.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN also agreed with his hon. friend as to the expediency of maintaining the doctrine that an ordinary document communicated to the Public Accounts Committee for its purposes should be regarded as confidential; but this was a Report presented to Parliament at the instance and in consequence of Questions put by Members of the House. Therefore, it was not a confidential document in any sense of the word. He adhered to his statement that in the case of a Report of this sort the proper course was to present it to the House and then let it be referred to the Committee.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he must explain, in correction of a misapprehension of the right hon. Gentleman, that the Report was not in any way the result of any representation made in the House. It was the result of action taken by himself as soon as he was made aware that these difficulties had occurred. It was the result of a Report made by a Committee appointed by him on his own Motion after reference to the House. It was his desire that the House should be made acquainted with the tenor of the

Report. He had perhaps erred in acquiescing in the request of his right hon. friend the Member for Walsall to forward him an advanced copy of the Report; but he had no desire to keep the Report back. It would be presented as soon as the evidence was received.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Was the Report laid in dummy?

[No Answer was audible.]

NEW BILLS.

RIGHTS OF WAY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Rights of Way in Scotland," presented by Mr. Buchanan; supported by Mr. Bryce, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. Crombie, and Captain Sinclair; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, June 28th, and to be printed. [Bill 234.]

STREET TRAFFIC REGULATION BILL.

"To provide for the Regulation of Traffic in Streets," presented by Mr. Shackleton; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 235.]

UNDER SHERIFFS (IRELAND) BILL.

"To regulate the appointment, duties, and remuneration of Under Sheriffs in Ireland," presented by Mr. John Gordon; supported by Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. T. L. Corbett, and Mr. Charles Craig; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, June 21st, and to be printed. [Bill 236.]

COMMITTEE (ASCENSION DAY).

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's) formally moved the Motion standing on the Order Paper in his name.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Committees do not sit To-morrow, being Ascension Day, until Two of the clock."—(Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.)

*SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee) said it was well known that great inconvenience was caused not only to Members of this House but to those who were promoting Private Bills in Committee by delaying the meeting of Committees on Ascension Day from 11 or 11.30 a.m. till 2 p.m. Why should this Motion be made? The Prime Minister three or four years ago stated that the Government of that day did not insist upon its being passed, and the right hon. Gentleman gave sufficient reasons why the practice should be allowed to fall into desuetude. Every hour of Parliamentary time, especially in connection with the procedure of Private Bills, was precious. The cost to promoters of Private Bills was already large enough without adding another day's expenses to the charges. Hon. Members were sent there to do the business of the country; and he saw no reason why, year after year, this practice of delaying business for hours, for which there might have been some excuse in former times, should be continued. It was out of no disrespect to those hon. Members who wished to attend a religious service on Ascension Day that he moved "That the Committee sit to-morrow at Twelve o'clock." There were

opportunities for those hon. Gentlemen to discharge their religious duty earlier in the morning. Moreover, it should be remembered that a large number of Members of this House and those interested in Private Bills were not influenced by these religious sentiments. He begged to move, "That the Committees meet to-morrow at Twelve o'clock, noon."

*SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) seconded the Amendment. He made a special appeal to the Prime Minister, or the right hon. Gentleman who represented him, to see whether an arrangement could not be made with the Chaplain of the House to hold an early service for the benefit of those members, if there were any such, who wished to attend service on Ascension Day.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'two,' and insert the word 'twelve' (*Sir John Leng*) instead thereof."

Question put, "That the word 'two' stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 199; Noes, 135. (Division List No. 189.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barry, E. (Cork, S.).
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boland, John
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)

Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C.R.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dillon, John
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fellowes, Rt. Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man-
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzgerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flavin, Michael Joseph

Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gilhooly, James
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'rH'mlets)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Graham, Henry Robert
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury)
Greene, W. Raymond (Cams.)
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Gunter, Sir Robert
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry)
Hammond, John
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hayden, John Patrick
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
Hudson, George Bickersteth

Hunt, Rowland
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
 Joyce, Michael
 Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
 Kenyon, Hn Geo. T. (Denbigh)
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
 Kilbride, Denis
 Knowles, Sir Lees
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
 Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks, N. R.)
 Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Frederick, N. S.
 Lowellyn, Evan Henry
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
 London, W.
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
 Maconochie, A. W.
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Hugh, Patrick A.
 M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W.)
 M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
 Majendie, James A. H.
 Malcolm, Ian
 Manners, Lord Cecil
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n)
 Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire)
 Middlemore, John Throgmorton
 Mildmay, Francis Bingham

Milvain, Thomas
 Mitchell, William (Burnley)
 Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
 Moon, Edward Robt. Pacy
 Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow)
 Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Muntz, Sir Philip A.
 Murphy, John
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Myers, William Henry
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Dowd, John
 O'Malley, William
 O'Mara, James
 O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
 Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
 Parker, Sir Gilbert
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
 Percy, Earl
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rankin, Sir James
 Ratcliff, R. F.
 Reddy, M.
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Renwick, George
 Ridley, S. Forde

Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Roche, John
 Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
 Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
 Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Spear, John Ward
 Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stroyan, John
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Sullivan, Donal
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tuff, Charles
 Valentia, Viscount
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
 Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Wilmoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
 Wrightson, Sir Thomas
 Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
 John Kennaway and Mr.
 Mount.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
 Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Allen, Charles P.
 Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Atherley-Jones, L.
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Benn, John Williams
 Blake, Edward
 Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
 Brigg, John
 Bright, Allan Heywood
 Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burke, E. Haviland
 Burns, John
 Burt, Thomas
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Robert
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Clancy, John Joseph
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
 Crombie, John William
 Crooks, William
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Dalziel, James Henry

Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
 Delany, William
 Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Duncan, J. Hastings.
 Dunn, Sir William
 Edwards, Frank
 Elibank, Master of
 Ellice, Capt. E. C. (S. Andw's Bghs)
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Emmott, Alfred
 Fenwick, Charles
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Findlay Alexander (Lanark, N.E.)
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
 Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
 Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
 Hain, Edward
 Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
 Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
 Helme, Norval Waston
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
 Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
 Higham, John Sharp
 Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
 Holland, Sir William Henry
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.

Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnson, John
 Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
 Kitson, Sir James
 Labouchere, Henry
 Lambert, George
 Lamont, Norman
 Langley, Batty
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
 Leigh, Sir Joseph
 Lough, Thomas
 Lyell, Charles Henry
 M'Crae, George
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 Mansfield, Horace Rendall
 Meysey, Thompson, Sir. H. M.
 Mooney, John J.
 Nannetti, Joseph P.
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
 Partington, Oswald
 Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Rea, Russell
 Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)

Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Richards, Thomas (W. Monmouth)
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Roe, Sir Thomas
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Roys, Clement Molyneux
 Runciman, Walter
 Russell, T. W.
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Shackleton, David James
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
 Sloan, Thomas Henry

Smith, Rt. Hon. J. Parker (Lanarks)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Spencer, Rt. Hon. C. R. (Northants)
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
 Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
 Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, J. A. (Glamorgan, Gower)
 Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomkinson, James
 Toulmin, George
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Villiers, Ernest Amherst

Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barasley)
 Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
 Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
 Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
 Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir
 John Leng and Sir Bramp-
 ton Gurdon.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, that Committees do not sit
 To-morrow, being Ascension Day, until
 Two of the Clock.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896, ETC., CONTINUANCE BILL.

Read a third time, and passed.

GOVERNMENT SHIPS BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned
 debate, on Question [17th May] "That
 the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) said he
 did not propose to add anything to the
 remarks he was making when the Bill
 was last under discussion, except once
 more to enter his protest against men
 engaged by the Admiralty or other
 Government Departments in civil em-
 ployment being brought under the Naval
 Discipline Act.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIR-
 ALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Wood-
 bridge) said that since this Bill was
 debated some days ago the objection
 then taken had been considered by the

Admiralty, and they had come to the
 conclusion that there was no necessity to
 put the hired crews of the vessels con-
 cerned under the Naval Discipline Act
 at all, except in case of war, in which
 event special measures would be open to
 the Admiralty. Therefore, the Bill was
 really one to enable the Admiralty to
 make regulations to govern these ships
 and their hired crews in peace time. In
 view of the opinion expressed in the
 House, the Admiralty were prepared to
 withdraw all reference to the Naval
 Discipline Act. They now proposed only
 to take power to apply all or any of the
 provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act,
 and, in addition, to make regulations for
 one purpose only, to which the Merchant
 Shipping Act was not applicable, viz.,
 to provide these ships with proper crews.
 In Committee Amendments would be
 introduced in the direction he had indi-
 cated, and any others that might be
 placed on the Paper could be then dis-
 cussed. He hoped that with that under-
 standing the House would give the Bill
 a Second Reading. As Amendments
 would be made in Committee there would
 of necessity be also a Report stage, and
 it would be much more convenient to
 discuss matters of detail in Committee
 than on the Second Reading.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 201; Noes,
 164. (Division List, No. 190.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
 Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
 Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Anson, Sir William Reynell

Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hon. Hugh O.
 Arrol, Sir William
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bailey, James (Waltham)
 Bain, Colonel James Robert

Baird, John George Alexander
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
 Banbury, Sir Frederick George

Banner, John S. Harmood-
 Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
 Bartley, Sir George C. T.
 Bignold, Sir Arthur
 Bill, Charles
 Bingham, Lord
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bond, Edward
 Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brotherton, Edward Allen
 Brymer, William Ernest
 Bull, William James
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, J. H.M. (Dublin Univ.)
 Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J.A. (Worc.)
 Clive, Captain Percy A.
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H.A.E.
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C.R.
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Darnley, Sir Charles
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Denny, Colonel
 Dickinson, Robert Edmond
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, Sir William Theodore
 Duke, Henry Edward
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Fellowes, Rt. Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manc'r)
 Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
 Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
 Fisher, William Hayes
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Flower, Sir Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gardner, Ernest
 Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
 Gordon, Hn. J. F. (Elgin & Nairn)
 Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)
 Gordon, Maj. Evans (T'RH'mlets)
 Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Graham, Henry Robert

Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury)
 Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
 Grenfell, William Henry
 Grettton, John
 Gunter, Sir Robert
 Hain, Edward
 Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
 Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry)
 Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Helder, Augustus
 Hoare, Sir Samuel
 Hobhouse, Rt. Hon. H. (Somers't, E)
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Houlst, Joseph
 Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hunt, Rowland
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
 Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh)
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
 Kerr, John
 Kimber, Sir Henry
 Knowles, Sir Lees
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th)
 Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. N.R.)
 Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
 Llewellyn, Evan Henry
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Bristol, S)
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Maconochie, A. W.
 M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W)
 M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
 Majendie, James A. H.
 Malcolm, Ian
 Manners, Lord Cecil
 Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n)
 Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire)
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Mildmay, Francis Bingham
 Milvain, Thomas
 Mitchell, William (Burnley)
 Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow)
 Morpeth, Viscount
 Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mount, William Arthur

Muntz, Sir Philip A.
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Myers, William Henry
 Parker, Sir Gilbert
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretyma, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rankin, Sir James
 Ratcliff, R. F.
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Renwick, George
 Ridley, S. Forde
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
 Rolit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
 Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Saunderson, Rt. Hon. Col. Edw. J.
 Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Sloan, Thomas Henry
 Spear, John Ward
 Stanley, Hon. Arthur (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stroyan, John
 Strutt, Hon. Chas. Hadley
 Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Tuff, Charles
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne)
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
 Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
 Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE YEAS—Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
 Abraham, William (Rhondda)
 Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Allen, Charles P.
 Ashton, Thomas Gair

Atherley-Jones, L.
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
 Benn, John Williams
 Blake, Edward

Boland, John
 Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
 Brand, Hon. Arthur G.
 Brigg, John
 Bright, Allan Heywood

Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burke, E. Haviland-
 Burns, John
 Burt, Thomas
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Robert
 Campbell, John (Armagh S.)
 Campbell, Bannerman, Sir H.
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Churchill, Winston Spencer
 Clancy, John Joseph
 Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
 Cremer, William Randal
 Crombie, John William
 Crooks, William
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
 Delany, William
 Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
 Dillon, John
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Duncan, J. Hastings
 Dunn, Sir William
 Edwards, Frank
 Elibank, Master of
 Ellice, Capt. EC (SAndrew's B'ghs)
 Emmott, Alfred
 Esmonde, Sir Thomas
 Fenwick, Charles
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE)
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Gladhooly, James
 Glidstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)
 Gurdon, Sir W. Bampton
 Hammond, John
 Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
 Harwood, George
 Hayden, John Patrick
 Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
 Helme, Norval Watson
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.

Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
 Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
 Holland, Sir William Henry
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnson, John
 Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
 Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
 Joyce, Michael
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kitson, Sir James
 Labouchere, Henry
 Lambert, George
 Lamont, Norman
 Law, Hugh Alex. (Donegal, W.)
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
 Leigh, Sir Joseph
 Leng, Sir John
 Levy, Maurice
 Lough, Thomas
 London, W.
 Lyell, Charles Henry
 MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 McCrae, George
 M'Hugh, Patrick A.
 Mansfield, Horace Rendall
 Mooney, John J.
 Murphy, John
 Nannetti, Joseph P.
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
 Norman, Henry
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, John (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
 O'Dowd, John
 O'Malley, William
 O'Mara, James
 O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
 Parrott, William
 Partington, Oswald
 Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
 Pirie, Duncan V.

Rea, Russell
 Reddy, M.
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Roche, John
 Roe, Sir Thomas
 Russell, T. W.
 Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
 Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Shackleton, David James
 Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
 Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Soares, Ernest J.
 Spencer, Rt. Hn. CR. (Northants)
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Sullivan, Donal
 Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, JA (Glamorgan, Gower)
 Thomson, F. W. (York, W.R.)
 Tomkinson, James
 Toulmin, George
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Villiers, Ernest Amherst
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
 Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
 Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
 Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
 Wills, Arthur Walters (NDorset)
 Wilson, Chas. Henry (Hull, W.)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Young, Samuel
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr.
 M'Kenna and Mr. Runciman.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

NAVAL LANDS (VOLUNTEERS) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question [May 15th], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) said this was only a one-clause Bill but it was most far-reaching in its effect. In

order to understand the nature of the Bill they had to go back to the year 1892, when the Military Lands Act was passed. According to that Act the Secretary of State might purchase land for military purposes, build sheds, and the like. Under that Act land might be purchased for military or naval purposes by the Secretary of State for War or the First Lord of the Admiralty, but these were Imperial purposes and had no relation whatever to private individuals, the locality, or the Volunteer corps. Here they were dealing with land and not accoutrements or anything of a movable nature, but with the acquisition of

land. Upon what principle should a Volunteer corps acquire land for naval purposes as provided for under this Act? He was aware that they had to get the consent of the Secretary of State, who could send down inspectors to investigate as to the suitability of the land and see that proper provision was made for the safety of the public. Was it not a very extraordinary thing to empower a Naval Volunteer corps to purchase land for naval purposes and that they should be responsible for the borrowing of the money giving the land and also the grant which was given to the Naval Volunteers as security? They were making grants to Volunteers, both military and naval, and what was the use of giving the grant if it was to be held as security for certain lands used for military and naval purposes.

In the case of the military there might have been something to be said for this at the time when the Volunteer corps was essentially a Volunteer corps, and when it did not pretend to be part and parcel of the military organisation as it had become lately. We had now an altogether altered state of matters both in regard to the military and Naval Volunteers. The Naval Volunteers were not now allocated to this country alone; they might be sent outside the country. That was a distinction which existed in the case of the Naval Volunteers which did not exist in the case of the military. The land which the Naval Volunteers were likely to take was land somewhere near the sea and as far away from dwellings as possible. Therefore it would probably be land that was practically of no other use. Take the case of a naval battery, which, he supposed, was one of the purposes for which land would be wanted. The land would first be purchased, and then a large amount of money would be expended in order to make it fit for the purposes of a battery. Power was being taken to borrow money for that purpose. Of what use was the land and the battery when the place had ceased to be used as a battery? But it was proposed to make the grants of the Volunteer corps liable as security for the money borrowed on that land.

Mr. Caldwell.

When the Military Lands Act was passed in 1892 the Volunteer force was not as it was now a part of the regular Army organisation. At that time the powers given were intended very much for providing rifle ranges, and, generally speaking, rifle ranges were easily accessible from a city or populous place. That land, if not used as a rifle range, would have a value corresponding very much to the value given for it as a rifle range. In connection with the Military Lands Act it was stated at the time that drill halls were wanted for the Volunteers. In the case of drill halls and the land on which they were built, there was perhaps something to be said for the locality making a little contribution. This Bill said not merely that a Volunteer corps might hold land, but that the council of a county or borough might hold land on behalf of one or more Volunteer corps. He maintained that the loyal people of a borough or a county district should not have the local funds saddled with the cost of providing what it was essentially the duty of the Imperial Government to provide. It was absolutely necessary that we should have these lands for military and naval purposes. On what reason or principle should a locality be in any way made responsible for the providing of land for purposes of that kind? Supposing a town council or county council borrowed money to provide a rifle range for a Volunteer corps there was likely to be something of value left when the land ceased to be used as a rifle range. In the case of a drill hall, obviously the buildings might be utilised in some way by the town council, and probably very little loss might be sustained. The land would probably rather increase in value, because the tendency was for land in towns to increase in value.

Another point was that the money was to be borrowed from the Public Works Loans Commissioners, repayable within fifty years, at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, or such rate as might be fixed by the Treasury. Why should a responsibility extending over fifty years be placed either on a Volunteer corps, a county council, or a town council in order to provide land for naval and military purposes? What would be the effect

supposing a Volunteer corps was disbanded? Where the land was held by the corps of course there was no difficulty because the Secretary of State for War, as representing the Government, was responsible for the loss in connection with that property. The land would become vested in the Secretary of State, subject to the repayment of any money borrowed and not repaid. The sum required, in so far as not provided by sale, was to be provided out of moneys voted by Parliament. But if land was held by a county council or a borough council, and the corps was disbanded, the council might appropriate the land to any purpose which could be approved of by the Local Government Board, or might sell it for the best price possible, and then any money received from the sale was to be applied towards the repayment of the money borrowed, and so far as not required to be applied for that purpose should be applied to any purpose to which the capital moneys were properly applicable and which were approved by the Local Government Board. Supposing there was a deficiency in the case of the county council or the borough council, then that was to be a burden on the county or the borough rates.

It might be asked why there should be all this roundabout transaction when a Volunteer corps had become responsible for the land. The Volunteer corps had to borrow the money and to give the Government grants in security of repayment. Power was given by the Act of 1897 to borrow in respect of buildings, as the Act of 1892 only applied to land. Buildings were not included under the Act of 1897, but the powers were afterwards extended to the purchase, construction, or alteration of permanent works for the purposes of Volunteer corps. In the case of a battery, for instance, that would include everything necessary to make up a military work. Another power was given in 1900 to county councils and borough councils to lease land to any Volunteer corps for military purposes for a period of ninety-nine years. That was a very precarious sort of undertaking; and it was obviously a very roundabout

way of getting money out of the Public Works Loan Commission. They lent the money, but if the money was not repaid, it was wiped out every year in the Public Works Loans Act. That was how they never knew exactly the amount of expenses which had been incurred. Then if the Volunteer corps was disbanded the lease was to vest in the Secretary of State subject to repayment. That was to say, the Secretary of State would be responsible, not only for the unexpired portion of the lease, but for the money borrowed as well. By the Act of 1903 a county council or borough council might, at the request of a Volunteer corps, hire land for military purposes for a period of twenty-one years. The object was that as limited owners were not in a condition to sell the land, it was advisable to confer power on them to lease land for not less than twenty-one years. But all these powers given to county councils and borough councils of hiring land, etc., were not for any local benefit whatever, but solely for the benefit of naval and military purposes for which the responsibility rested on the State. Naval Volunteers were organised for the purpose of defending the country as a whole, and not for the purpose of defending that part of the country where their battery happened to be situated.

His contention was that all expenditure for naval and military works—batteries, rifle ranges, etc.—should be a national, not a local charge. That was more especially the case in regard to Naval Volunteers, who by recent Acts could be taken out of the country on emergency and were an essential part of the Imperial service. Hence the locality should not be burdened with the expense of providing them with batteries or other means of training. Every service in this country should be kept within its own sphere; local rates for local purposes, and Imperial taxation for Imperial purposes. Much was heard as to the extent to which local rates were rising; but why should the local rates be burdened with expenses for purposes which had nothing to do with the locality? He did not wish to move the rejection of the Bill, because he knew that there might be cases in which the

Admiralty might be able to get land for the desired purpose themselves. He did not object to the Admiralty having all the powers to borrow money to provide everything necessary for the training of the Naval Volunteers; but he objected to the county councils and the borough councils being in any way involved in a matter of this kind. He protested against the Naval Volunteers having to give security for money borrowed to buy or lease land for batteries out of the grants which Parliament voted to them for efficiency as a Volunteer corps; and he strongly objected to county councils and town councils being made responsible in a matter which concerned the country as a whole.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said there must be some misunderstanding in regard to proceeding with this Bill. The announcement was made the previous evening that the Agricultural Rating Act Continuance Bill was to be first taken. The Government Ships Bill was allowed to be taken without any discussion. He would not go the length of saying that there was a definite pledge that no other business would be taken; but there was a general understanding that no other business would be taken, and there was general surprise that discussion had arisen on the Naval Lands (Volunteers) Bill, and hon. Members were indebted to the hon. Member for Mid.-Lanark for his able and lucid statement in regard to that measure. He asked the right hon. Gentleman if he would allow this debate to be adjourned? There was a general understanding that this Bill, which presented opportunities for a good deal of discussion, would not be taken that afternoon. The Memorandum ought to be enough to warn the House not to proceed hastily with the Bill. It was not a good argument to say that because the military authorities had power to acquire land similar power should be given to the naval authorities. It was an entirely different matter. Hon. Gentlemen opposite objected to power being given to local authorities to borrow money; but Bills of this character almost invariably proceeded from those hon. Gentlemen themselves. He thought more time should

be given for the consideration of the measure.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's) said he could not admit there was any breach of faith in taking the Bill. He stated in reply to a Question that the Agricultural Rating Bill would be taken as the first order, and the Government Ships Bill as the second order; but that did not mean that no other business would be taken. As regarded the statement of the hon. Gentleman that more time should be given for the Second Reading, he would point out that the Second Reading was part heard, so to speak, three weeks ago. Therefore, there was nothing to be founded on that argument. He would be quite prepared, if this stage of the Bill were taken, not to proceed further to-day. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would accept his assurance that he did not give a pledge that no further Bills would be considered.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said that after the masterly statement of the Member for Mid.-Lanark the House should not pass the Bill without adequate discussion. He objected to the Bill on two grounds. Firstly, it was legislation by reference, which rendered it difficult for hon. Members to understand what was proposed. It would have been much simpler to have introduced a Bill on the lines of the Military Lands Act. It was generally believed in the country that the Admiralty was better managed than the War Office; and it would have been better if the Admiralty had worked on their own lines rather than have followed the War Office. He also objected on another ground. The Bill would remove control of expenditure from Parliament. If the money were needed for the purpose of purchasing land for Naval Volunteers, then Parliament should be given the option of saying whether it agreed or not. The Estimate ought to be put down in the usual way. This roundabout way of spending money was against all the principles of sound finance.

*SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said that having regard to the description

of the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Lanark as masterly, it would be a pity to waste the afternoon. He wished to express his surprise that of all men the hon. Member for West Islington should suggest what was practically a Derby Day adjournment. He thought that the better sense of the House would prevail; and that business would be proceeded with. He did not for a moment suggest that the Bill was not open to very considerable objection. In how many cases had the Military Works Act been put into operation? He objected to the proposal that the Government should be paid out of the rates for providing land for naval purposes. At the same time he was most strongly in favour of giving every facility to the Volunteers, naval or military; and if there was any such prospect he would be the last to interpose any obstacle. The Volunteers were, however, like the Militia, in a state of chronic doubt as to their ultimate fate. That was the difficulty. This Bill was not a Bill to enable the State to do its duty to the Volunteers; if the Volunteers did their duty to the State the State ought to do its duty to the Volunteers; this was a Bill to allow the corporations and the Volunteers themselves to do what the State ought to do for them. After the Volunteers had under the Act spent their money and the corporations the money of the ratepayers, the result might be that the lands and buildings might be left on their hands. The work of the defence of this country was primarily the duty of the State, and under no Bill or Act of Parliament should the Volunteers be under the obligation to erect batteries for the defence of the nation. The thing was absurd on the face of it. The question of a drill hall for Naval Volunteers was a different question, but with regard to all those things which were essential to the proper training of the State forces they should be furnished by the State.

How many corporations had applied the Military Lands Act? Had it been generally applied by the municipalities it would have been a strong argument in favour of this Bill, but that was not the case. Some corporations,

he was aware, had given land for the purpose in their own locality, and perhaps that meant that if the corps ceased to exist the possession of the land would be resumed, and if such gifts were made all the better for the Volunteer forces and of course the State, the performance of its duties thereby being delegated to another body which had nothing to do with the general defence of the country. Exception was taken by some corporations to the terms upon which they were permitted to borrow from the rates for such a purpose as this. The Military Lands Act gave fifty years in which to repay a loan which was based on the security of land. Land was a permanent asset. However bad a man might be he could not run away with an acre of land, and in his opinion the time for repayment in such a case should be eighty or a hundred years. In the Committee stage of this Bill he should move to increase the term of repayment. Again, why should the ratepayers be called upon to make good the ultimate deficiency, if any? They had already performed their obligations and if there was ultimately a deficiency it should be borne by the community. He saw no reason under the Military Lands Act for putting that obligation on the ratepayers. If they thought it right and wise to help the Volunteers, he saw no reason why they should be prevented from doing so, but they should not be allowed to assume an ultimate liability of this kind for posterity to discharge.

He agreed with the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark that it was mean and shabby to take as part of the security the capitation grant. The capitation grant was given in order to enable the Volunteers to perfect themselves in their military and naval duties. It was granted for the sustentation of the corps, and to say under this Act of Parliament, "You may build drill halls and so forth but we shall take the capitation grant as security," was not only unwise but unworthy on the part of any Government which put such proposals before the House. Whatever might be said about the Volunteers they had saved the country large sums of money in the past, and he believed with a very short training they would be a most effective force for

home defence in any emergency in the future. At the present moment we were discouraging them and wiping out such corps as the Militia and Volunteer submarine miners and the like, and making changes the value of which was extremely problematical, and would probably soon be changed again, yet at the same time we were passing Acts to enable other people to do what was really the duty of the State. While he should support the Second Reading of the Bill, in Committee he should endeavour to make such alterations as he deemed desirable to adapt it and the Military Lands Act to practical and just application in the interest of the State.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he regarded the debate as somewhat hollow. The general object which the Bill had in view had his sympathy, but he joined the hon. Gentleman opposite in the comments he had made on the way in which the Bill was to be carried out. There was a well-known case in his own county where the people were desirous of getting a range. They took advantage of the Military Lands Act, with the result that they were involved in litigation which terminated in a cost of £700 to themselves and they did not get the range. He was sorry to say anything in opposition to the Home Secretary, but he did not think it tended to the dignity or the usefulness of this House that an arrangement should be made that the House should adjourn when this debate had come to a conclusion, and the orders of the day had been gone through. There were twenty-one Government orders on the Paper, and he thought, having disposed of the first two orders, the House should proceed to consider the other orders it had before it. If such an arrangement was allowed to be carried through, it would not lay in the mouth of the Government hereafter to find fault with and to put pressure on the House to make arrangements for the acceleration of business.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs), as a thorough believer in the making of mutual arrangements, differed from the remarks of the last speaker. Progress had been made, not because hon. Members desired to shirk their duty, but

because they had postponed their criticism to enable the Government to get particular stages of certain Bills. It was to the best interests of the House that whenever possible mutual arrangements should be made and carried out. If the sitting were continued the House would have to discuss measures which no one had the least notion would be reached that day. The Bill under consideration was clearly not generally acceptable to the House. His main objection was that it involved legislation by reference, which was sufficient justification for opposing any Bill. But as there would be an opportunity for dealing with the matter in Committee, he was prepared to postpone his remarks.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham) said that criticisms had been made, on the one hand, by those who objected to the principle of the Bill, and on the other, by those who, although regarding the privilege as having been rightly extended to military Volunteers, objected to its extension to Naval Volunteers. Personally he could not understand why any preferential treatment should be accorded in this matter as against the Navy. The argument seemed to be that military Volunteers would be employed in this country, whereas Naval Volunteers would not. Obviously if Naval Volunteers were to be of any use whatever they must be employed upon the sea; if engaged in naval operations they must follow the enemy wherever he might go. That objection, therefore, was not a very valid one. The hon. Member for Lanarkshire had tried to draw a distinction between the value of drill halls and other property acquired by Naval Volunteers and the value of similar property belonging to military corps. He could not follow the hon. Member's argument on that point, as the requirements in the two cases were precisely similar. In reply to other objections he could assure the House that there was no proposal or intention to apply this money to batteries either for defence or for drill purposes. Batteries for drill purposes, if required by Naval Volunteers, were provided by the Government out of naval funds. What was required was that drill halls for shore exercises should

be provided for Naval Volunteers in the same way as for military Volunteers.

MR. CALDWELL pointed out that the Act of Parliament which it was proposed to incorporate gave power for permanent works, without any limitation whatever.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said there was no desire or intention on the part of the naval authorities to erect batteries or to apply these funds to any purpose but the provision of drill halls and sheds of similar nature to those already supplied for military Volunteers; consequently the argument that the sites would be less valuable in the event of the disbandment of a corps fell to the ground. There was no reason to suppose that a site would not have the value it originally possessed or that any charge of a serious nature would fall on either naval funds or local authorities.

MR. LOUGH asked how often the Act had been put into operation.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said the Military Lands Act was being continually applied.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said that his point was more particularly as to its application by borough councils. He knew of few, if any, instances.

MR. LOUGH: Can we have figures?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that statistics could probably be supplied, but he could assure the hon. Member that the Act had been very often applied. In most cases the money was borrowed, not by the local authorities, but by the Volunteers themselves under the provisions of this Act.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT said he did not doubt its application by Volunteers; his reference was to its application by borough councils.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said that it depended upon the willingness or otherwise of local authorities to assume the burden. If they were willing in the interests of the country at large to assume that responsibility there was

no justification for preventing them. The local authorities of the city of Glasgow were particularly anxious to assume the burden on behalf of the Volunteer corps there, but were unable to do so under present conditions. Objection had been raised to legislation by reference. The original Bill consisted of twenty-nine clauses, and it was in accordance with the well-established practice of the House, where there was no desire to change the principle but simply to extend its application, that the whole of the provisions of the original Act should not be brought up to be rediscussed.

Objection had been taken to local authorities being permitted to assume a share of the burden. He did not by any means anticipate that a charge would fall on the local authorities in all cases, but, in any event, any loan would be well secured. It was secured, first of all, on the land, and then on the Government grant. The hon. Member for South Islington described that as a mean proposal, because the grant was given to the Volunteers to increase their efficiency. But surely one of the first essentials for these corps, if they were to be efficient, was that they should have proper facilities for drill, and he could not see why this should not be a proper charge to place on the grant, as the primary purpose of the grant would be to increase the efficiency of the corps. As to its being the duty of the Government to provide drill halls, the Government assumed a certain financial responsibility with regard to Volunteer corps, which responsibility they discharged by money grants. It would be inadvisable to attempt to force the Government to pay both in meal and in malt. The contribution in the form of a grant was the most convenient, and, so far as he knew, no serious objection had ever been taken to it. He failed to see how hon. Members could differentiate between naval and military corps in this matter. If it was right that the principle should be extended to military Volunteers it was equally right that the same advantages should be given to Naval Volunteers, who were not contemplated at the time of the original Act, otherwise they would undoubtedly have been similarly treated. The principle of the present Bill was extremely simple, being merely to remove

the existing preferential treatment against Naval Volunteers. The period of borrowing was open for discussion, he agreed, but he thought it could be more properly dealt with in Committee. He did not think the local authority would be the people upon whom the burden would fall. The only object of this Bill was to place the Naval Volunteers on the same footing as the other Volunteers, and therefore he hoped the House would allow the Bill to be read a second time.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said the hon. Member for Fareham stated that the Act of 1893 did not provide these powers of borrowing because at that time the formation of these Naval corps was not then contemplated. He thought the hon. Member was wrong, because there had been Naval Volunteers before, but they were found to be ineffectual and useless for naval purposes and that was the real reason why the Act of 1893 did not provide for the Naval Volunteers. Recruiting had almost stopped for the Royal Naval Reserves, although this was a force which would be of real service and could be sent into the Fleet at a day's notice. The Government had stopped recruiting for the Royal Naval Reserves, whilst on the other hand they were encouraging the formation of the Naval Volunteer force. A land Volunteer force was an excellent institution and soldiers could be very quickly made, but that was not the case with the sailor. They must have sailors ready made before they were any use in the Fleet, and when they took young men like city clerks and others and dressed them in uniform they were only deluding themselves. Some of the Naval Volunteers had got their uniforms and that was about all they had got. He objected to the Naval Volunteers being encouraged by a Bill of this kind to enter upon a course of borrowing which would be as ruinous to the corps as it would be ruinous, if persevered in, to the country. If a Bill had been introduced to enable them to acquire some thousands of acres of sea and to build ships, there might have been some meaning in it. What did Naval Volunteers want with drill halls? There were Volunteer drill halls all over the country which

could be let to the Naval Volunteers without the necessity of building others. In all the naval ports the Naval Reserve drill-halls could be utilised for the Naval Volunteers.

With regard to what had been said about referential legislation, an emphatic protest had been made against this kind of legislation in another place. In 1893, at his instigation, the Behring Fisheries Bill was re-enacted and embodied in the Bill in the shape of a schedule. Why could they not put the Act of 1893 in this Bill in the schedule? Whenever a referential Bill was brought up the House should insist upon the Bills referred to being put in the schedule. He entirely objected to the new system of Naval Volunteers because he believed they were perfectly useless, and he protested against public money being devoted to support them, especially when it was accompanied by stopping enlistment in the Royal Naval Reserves. He also objected to the still more demoralising suggestion that borough councils were to be their accomplices in such ventures. The principle was altogether dangerous and the measure required reconsideration.

SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) said it should be remembered that the military Volunteers numbered 250,000 men, whilst the Naval Volunteers only numbered about 6,500 last year, whilst this year they had gone down to 4,700. Of the 6,500 only 3,600 were efficient. In regard to ranges and drill halls being required there was all the difference in the world between these two forces. The business of the Naval Volunteers was to pursue the enemy on the sea, and surely they did not want borough councils to acquire land for them. This Bill was wrongly conceived altogether, and to pledge the Government grant to the Volunteers as security for the land was most objectionable.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

And, there being no further Business, set down for the Afternoon Sitting, Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER left the Chair until the Evening Sitting.

Mr. Arthur Lee.

EVENING SITTING.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE
(IRELAND) ACT, 1887.

*Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) said that seventeen years ago, when he had the honour of introducing a Motion of this kind before, he was replied to by the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, whom they were glad again to see in his place. They had many a wordy war across the floor of the House and there had been many an angry scene in which he and those who sat with him and the hon. and gallant Member took part, but all were ready to admit that the hon. and gallant Gentleman had always borne himself in an honourable and gallant manner, and no one was more glad than he to see the hon. and gallant Member again amongst them.

No section of the Members of this House ought to be more concerned with this Motion than those who represented English constituencies. The law it sought to repeal was an outrage on the English Constitution, which had been slowly built up on the patience, sufferings, and struggles of the English people. In Ireland that Constitution had been frequently suspended; it had been suspended no less than eighty-six times since the Union, and he would point out to representatives of the Government here to-night that whatever might have been the ideas of their predecessors upon the subject when they introduced these Coercion Acts, not one of them had dared to come down to the House with a proposal to make them permanent. Mr. W. E. Foster, while Chief Secretary for Ireland, ruled the Irish people very severely and dealt most severely with Members on the Nationalist side of the House, but when it was suggested to him in 1881 that he might make the Coercion Act he was then proposing permanent, he replied that he would never dare to do any such thing, that he would never give any man such powers as he had himself by that Act, because he said he had confidence in himself that he would not abuse those powers, but he would never hang a sword of Damocles over the heads of the Irish people for another to take down at will. Even he, who they only

now remembered as a young man, who came to their country and aided the people when they were suffering from famine, strong and bold man as he was, would not take on himself the latitude he might have done and propose a permanent Coercion Act for Ireland.

It was generally said in these discussions that this was only a Procedure Act and that it did not change the law, but procedure was a very important thing in the administration of law, which was originally devised to protect the liberties of the subject. Therefore it was idle to say that a change in the procedure did not change the law itself. He remembered distinctly that when the Crimes Act of 1882 was being passed in this House, an Act that provided for the trial of persons accused of certain offences mentioned by the Act by a Commission of Judges and not by a jury, that great Irish lawyer and Judge, Baron Fitzgerald retired from his office and resigned his Judgeship rather than administer a law which he said struck at all the fundamental principles of law and justice. Before this Act was brought in, and before the Government—which had now, with a short interval, been twenty years in power—came into office, speeches were made in the country entirely different in character to those made after the Conservative Government came into power, and the man who created most influence in the country and brought about that condition of things which made a Conservative Government possible in 1885 said, before proposing coercion—

“The Government must have terrible facts and terrible evidence to support their demand.”

That was the language held by Lord Randolph Churchill and all those who constituted the Government when they came into office. The Act he now proposed to repeal by his Motion was brought in in 1887 when the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, then the Chief Secretary for Ireland, said—

“I stated before and I state again that we do not rest our case on statistics of agrarian crime in Ireland.”

The right hon. Gentleman did not rest his case on the statistics because they would not support the introduction of any such Bill and would not justify it. The right hon. Gentleman relied upon

the speeches made by Irish Members of Parliament to their constituents and by other gentlemen, the principles contained in which speeches had since been affirmed by this House by the Home Rule Bill of 1893 and the Irish Land Act of 1903. But the right hon. Gentleman had a weak case even then, and to supplement the effect of the speeches which he had quoted, said in justification of this measure that—

“Some members of the National League had only in view this disinterested object, but he could not forget that the league leant in part on those secret societies which worked by dynamite and dagger.”

The right hon. Gentleman used those words on March 28th, 1887, and on that evening the First Reading of the Bill was carried. On April 28th, a month after, there was published in *The Times* the Pigott forged documents and on the same evening the Second Reading of the Bill was carried. He bracketted the statements of the Prime Minister, then Chief Secretary of Ireland, with the letters of Pigott which appeared in *The Times* on April 28th. The charges then made recklessly by the Prime Minister from his place in the House, and which were backed up by the assassin paper *The Times*, were within a year afterwards, after much toil and trouble on the part of the Irish people, refuted by the Royal Commission, but the falsehood, had done its work. Pigott had perished by his own hand, but *The Times* newspaper still vented its spleen on that portion of the Empire which had so excited its hatred, and the Act was put on the Statute-book ready to the hand of any future Chief Secretary who might be weak enough to yield to the enemies of Ireland.

This Act was passed ostensibly for the prohibition of and the dealing with crime. In fact it was passed for an entirely different purpose. The first section recreated practically what was once known in the history of this country as the Star Chamber. It was idle to urge, as had been urged, that this Act would inflict no injury whatever on law-abiding persons. He had in the course of his experience come into collision with a similar section of one of these Acts prevailing in Ireland. He remembered once being summoned to a Star Chamber inquiry which was opened

to inquire into a certain matter in county Cork. He had noticed that most of the people examined before these inquiries were examined on almost every matter except the one they were called upon to testify—and when he was called upon he was determined to have a test case with the magistrate. When he appeared before that gentleman he asked him whether he was going to confine himself to the subject-matter of the summons. The magistrate turned upon him savagely and asked him how he dared to ask such a question. He replied that he had not only dared, but unless he had that assurance would refuse to be sworn, and as a result the magistrate committed him to prison before the day was out. In the course of a week he was liberated and on the following morning received a similar summons. He again appeared before the magistrate, who said, “Well, sir, have you changed your mind,” to which he replied, “No, sir, have you changed yours?” The interview was of a very angry character and he was sent back to prison. Then he took another course; he sent a letter to the Chief Secretary of the day and in return had a reply of a kind but firm character, and on the third occasion when he appeared before this magistrate it struck him that this gentleman had also received a letter, because he said he had never intended to go further than the summons. He was then duly sworn, asked a few questions about a matter of which he knew nothing, and was allowed to go. He asserted that he was brought there not to give any information but for the purpose of being annoyed and persecuted.

It was nonsense to say that this law affected no law-abiding person—he claimed to be as law-abiding as anyone on the opposite side—because another section of this Act created a special jurisdiction which practically for all purposes abolished trials by jury in Ireland. He remembered, in 1888, that he made a speech to his constituents for which he was afterwards prosecuted under this very clause. In that speech he had not incited anybody to commit a crime or to do an act of intimidation, yet the indictment upon which he was prosecuted was that he had incited some person unknown to intimidate a person or persons unknown against taking a

Mr. John O'Connor.

farm unknown the property of a person unknown to those who drafted the indictment, and, though the House, would hardly believe it, on that indictment he was sentenced by two magistrates to four months imprisonment. But that was not the worst feature of this clause, because under this clause all those cases of conspiracy in trade disputes that had lately been tried in this country by the High Court, cases against workmen that had been tried before the High Court and taken from thence to the Court of Appeal and to the House of Lords, would, if they had occurred in Ireland, have been tried under this clause by two magistrates and the benefit of a jury would have been entirely denied to the people interested. It was not only that the procedure was bad in this respect, but the section put the liberties of the people into the hands of a set of magistrates whose position depended entirely upon their complacency with the authorities and who were removable by the very persons who ordered the prosecutions.

The next clause enabled the Government to have persons tried by special juries and to change the venue. That was doubtless made out to be a very harmless provision, but the way in which it worked out was that an accused man might be taken into a county where the majority of the people differed from him in faith and politics, and be tried before a jury selected from a special panel. Not only had the Crown a special list of jurors, but it was specially marked by those who knew the jurors' politics, so that by the exercise of its unlimited right of challenge the Crown was able to put into the box a jury composed of men entirely opposed to the accused. Whether the trial was properly conducted or not, the accused, under these circumstances, could not possibly have the idea that he was being fairly tried.

The next important section empowered the Lord-Lieutenant to proclaim an association if he was satisfied that it was interfering with the administration of the law. That was a most unconstitutional provision, and in the hands of unscrupulous men was capable of being used for any purpose whatever. Lord Londonderry had

recently stated that the Chief Secretary was going to govern Ireland according to Unionist principles and for Unionist interests. What did that mean? Under this clause, at the very time when land transactions were taking place and the people needed the counsel of their advisers, meetings could be suppressed and branches of the United Irish League dissolved. At the time of the Land Act of 1881, Mr. Parnell announced his intention of having a number of test cases brought into Court in order to secure the fixing of a standard, and thus to save the people the cost of having their rents fixed individually. But no sooner was the announcement made than he was clapped into gaol. In like manner, in 1887, the country was proclaimed soon after the Ashbourne Purchase Act had been put into operation, and now again when land transactions were taking place proclamations were threatened. Under this clause the Act could be made to serve every Unionist purpose. It was administered by Unionists; the Chief Secretary, the Attorney-General, and the Solicitor-General were Unionists, and all the magistrates who had to administer the Act were drawn from the same Party; so that the law could be used, not to put down crime—for that did not exist—but to suppress one class in the interests of another. Writing of the Bill in 1887 Sir G. Trevelyan said—

"The real defect of this measure is that it is a coercion Bill directed against the spoken and written expression of opinion, and which will be worked by administrators who have proved beyond all question that they are actuated by the strongest Orange sympathies."

That was true then, and it was true to-day; the spirit which prevailed in Dublin Castle then prevailed still. Shortly before that time there were in the Castle men who sympathised with the people—Mr. Hamilton and General Buller—the latter of whom, like Sir Antony MacDonnell, was sent over to see things with a fresh eye. He divested himself of his sword and went amongst the people, with the result that, backed up by Mr. Hamilton, he reported that the people had grievances which ought to be redressed. Then a Unionist Government came into office, and he got his discharge, just as hon. Members opposite were now

seeking to get Sir Antony MacDonnell discharged.

Seeing that the Act was not warranted by the condition of the country, why was it maintained? Certain causes of irritation had been to a large extent removed. The Land Act of 1903 and its predecessors were working out the salvation of the country in one direction. Land was changing hands, the period of evictions might be said to be over, and that fruitful source of whatever crime existed in the past being removed there was no necessity for the continuance of the Act. Moreover, it had been utterly useless in the past. In 1895 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose stated that eleven convictions had been obtained, and added—

“But I believe, and in that I am supported by the great authority of Lord Spencer, that with the exception of the Phoenix Park cases everyone of those convictions would have been obtained without a special inquiry.”

The right hon. Gentleman was strongly of opinion that the ordinary law was sufficient. And what good had the Act done? Between 1889 and 1892, 3,243 persons were imprisoned under its provisions, and another 189 were sentenced between 1901 and 1903. Did any hon. Gentleman opposite believe that a single one of those persons was from their point of view a better man than before? Twenty-three Members of Parliament had suffered forty-four terms of imprisonment between them, and was it supposed that any of them were any better affected towards English rule in Ireland in consequence? The Act was utterly useless for its purpose, and for this and other reasons he asked why such a blur should be kept on the Statute-book. He trusted he had given sufficient reasons for abandoning a causeless, irritating, and insulting law, which was neither justified by the conditions of the country nor effective in conducing to its happiness. He begged to move.

*MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) pointed out that recent developments in Ireland gave to this Motion an actuality and urgency which some months ago it might have lacked, as it was perfectly

clear that the pendulum was once more swinging in the direction of active coercion. The only alternatives before any Government which attempted to administer Ireland were full and free trust in the people and coercion. There was no middle course, though attempts had been made to find one. The late Lord Salisbury said that Ireland was to have twenty years of resolute Government. That turned out to be coercion pure and simple. Long before the twenty years were over coercion was found by the authorities to be a very unpleasant method of government, and an experiment in conciliation was tried by the present President of the Local Government Board. During the first months of the Secretaryship of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover the pendulum reverted to coercion, but the policy being found unsatisfactory a fresh experiment in conciliation was tried. By the inevitable law of fate which doomed to futility every attempt to govern Ireland except in accordance with the will of the people the pendulum had once more swung, and they were again face to face with coercion.

How long was this to go on? Had the Government any end in view? Had they any policy? The late Chief Secretary during the latter part of his administration had a policy, summed up by the Lord-Lieutenant as attempting to govern Ireland within the Union according to Irish ideas. The present Chief Secretary professed himself unable to understand what the phrase meant. If not according to Irish ideas, according to whose ideas were the Government going to govern Ireland? It could not be according to English ideas, as certainly English ideas would not approve of the proclamation of meetings or the dragging about public roads of Members of Parliament who attempted to address their constituents. The truth was the Government were proposing to govern Ireland according to the ideas of a little dwindling faction from the North-East of Ireland, men who were never tired of defaming their own country, who made the catch-cry of “persecution of the minority” an excuse for the coercion of the majority, and whose idea of persecution was exactly the same as when

Mr. John O'Connor.

Thomas Moore wrote his "Humble Petition of Orangemen" about a hundred years ago—

"To the people of England, the Humble Petition

Of Ireland's disconsolate Orangemen, showing

That sad, very sad, is our present condition,

Our work is all gone, and our noble selves going ;

That forming one-seventh—within a few fractions

Of Ireland's seven millions of hot heads and hearts,

We hold it the basest of all base transactions

To keep us from murdering the other six parts."

If the Chief Secretary listened to those men they would drag him down as they had dragged down so many of his predecessors. He need look for no constructive policy from them. He would make no advance in the governing of Ireland, and his Chief Secretaryship would not be remembered as having added anything to the welfare of the country. Those men could hinder, exasperate, and retard, but they could not stop the advancing march of the nation. He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the presence of The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act on the Statute-book is a gross violation of the Constitution, without parallel in any other portion of His Majesty's dominions, and that the Act should be immediately repealed."—(*Mr. John O'Connor.*)

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said that after a prolonged absence it was like old times to come down to the House and take a humble part in a coercion debate. Hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to imagine that the Ulster Members had the great happiness of guiding the counsels of Dublin Castle, but he could assure them that they had no more influence in that direction than any other Members of the House who openly and candidly expressed their opinions. From Questions that had been asked recently it might be supposed that His Majesty's Government were of opinion that Ireland was remarkable for the

amount of crime, and that, to use Mr. Gladstone's words, Irishmen had been supplied with a "double dose of original sin." That was all beside the question under discussion. He was happy and proud to believe that in regard to crime, as ordinarily understood, Ireland had a favourable position as compared with other parts of the Empire. ["Hear, hear!" "Then why attain coercion?"] Because the Act was not directed against ordinary crime. The Motion before the House declared—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the presence of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act on the Statute-book is a gross violation of the Constitution, without parallel in any other portion of His Majesty's dominions."

The hon. Member might have carried the terms of his Motion further; he might have said that no other country had such an Act on the Statute-book. Would the hon. Member go further and also say that no civilised country had such a society as the Irish National League? He would venture to say that there was no other country which, if it had to deal with such a society associated with so much crime and outrage in the past, would meet it with so lenient a measure as the Act now condemned by hon. Members opposite. No law-abiding man of any class or creed or section of politics was in the least interfered with by the existence of such an Act. The hon. Member opposite gave an account of something which occurred in his earlier days which was the cause of his being temporarily withdrawn from the sphere of freedom. Then he informed the House that since that time he had been a law-abiding citizen. He did not know the circumstances of the hon. Member's case, but what he should like to know was, could any hon. Gentleman opposite bring forward a case in which any man in Ireland who chose to live within the ordinary laws of the land had been interfered with, and was interfered with, by this Act.

It had been said over and over again in the House that the Crimes Act interfered with the liberties of the Irish people. Certainly it interfered with the liberties of some of the Irish people, because some of the Irish people held an entirely different idea

of the meaning of liberty than that which he attached to it. [NATIONALIST cheers.] He was very glad that those words of his were acceptable to hon. Gentlemen opposite. His idea of liberty was that any man, whoever he might be, was free to pursue his vocations, whatever they were, within the law; so far as he could make out from hon. Gentlemen opposite, not only from their speeches in that House but especially from their speeches on the other side of the St. George's Channel, their meaning of liberty was the liberty of a certain set of Irishmen to force another set of Irishmen to obey their dictates. That was not his idea of liberty, and if the Act which they now desired to repeal interfered with that liberty, then it was a proof that no better Act could be passed for Ireland. If any stranger could have come into the House for the first time and heard an Irish debate, and listened to the speech of the hon. Member for North Kildare, he would never have imagined that in Ireland there existed such a thing as the Irish National League. Anybody who took the trouble to read the newspapers, and to follow the course pursued in Ireland by hon. Gentlemen opposite and by their friends who guided the procedure of that association, would see that there was at the present moment in Ireland an organisation which had for its object—quite outside the law—guided by their own policy, which had the power and authority in many parts of Ireland of constraining Irishmen certainly to do that which they did not desire to do.

What was the main object of the Irish League? Its main object was with regard to the land. They did not attack landlords now, because the House had removed the property of landlords from their own keeping. The National League at the present moment appeared to devote its energies to planting the people on the land. That was so in a large part of Ireland where grass land existed. These grass lands were to be broken up and divided amongst those in Ireland, who either had no land, or if they ever had had land had lost it. That was the ostensible object of the league. He had no objection to the league if its objects were pursued in a legal manner. But how were they pursued? How

was its policy carried out in Ireland? Was it carried out as policy had been in England, in Scotland, or in Wales, by Members of Divisions going down and giving calm and peaceful advice as to how its lawful object should be achieved. He thought he could show the House that the National League in Ireland at the present moment did give advice, but gave it in very strong language which certainly was not of a Parliamentary character. He took, for instance, a meeting in Ireland, reported in the *Freeman's Journal*. In a speech delivered by the Rev. Canon M'Alpine, that gentleman said—

"Now I say, and I accept the fullest responsibility for my words, that in a crisis like this, should the State fail to discharge the first duty which it owes to the community—namely, to preserve and to support life—our people would be the veriest fools if they allowed themselves to starve so long as fat sheep were grazing on the hillside or sleek kine were browsing on the plain."

Would hon. Gentlemen accept that for their policy as enunciated by a priest and politician? That was the advice given by a gentleman who occupied a prominent position in the Irish National League. He would give them another instance. This was what Mr. O'Reilly said at a meeting of the United Irish League at Kilconnell on December 11th last—

"I do not want you to make the green grass red again with the blood of martyrs. I am opposed to murder in any form. But I would nearly sympathise with the devil if he were to come up and sweep a grabber to hell."

That was good stout National League advice. He went on to say—

"Now I appeal to all present to immediately take out cards of membership of the United Irish League, and not only that, but to be prepared to give the life of the damned to any person who is condemned by that organisation."

That was the way advice was given by the Irish National League. It was all very well for hon. Gentlemen to make eloquent speeches in that House, but did they approve of that language? If they did not, why did they not say so in Ireland. He had still another instance. This was Mr. Kelly, who made a speech in South Galway in November last. This gentleman said he often thought, on learning of the extravagant prices being paid for land, that the people must be gone mad. Some of these people deserved to be shot down as John Blake had been

shot, and the revolver was there still. Whenever a man was found going into the enemy's camp he should be brought down. That was the advice of an organisation to cope with which this Act had been put on the Statute-book. No man had defended the Act more eloquently than the hon. Member for South Tyrone, and in those days no hon. Member brought forward more cases of the tyranny of the Irish National League than he did. Now the hon. Member for South Tyrone talked of "gerrymandering." These might be different ways of politicians in Ireland who were carried away by their national sentiments and their un-national eloquence. Here was a quotation which he thought the House ought to hear and some hon. Gentlemen opposite ought to remember. At a meeting of the South Galway Executive of the United Irish League held at Loughrea on April 16th, Father Newell, C.C., spoke as follows in condemnation of outrages—

"If there is anything that merits my approbation it is the condemnation of those outrages on brute beasts and other outrages that might bring disgrace into our ranks. I see no member of the Ballinderry branch of the league here, and I do not come before you because my brother happens to be the parish priest there. I come to condemn the outrages that have been committed in Ballinderry under the guise of nationality. You all know the outrages that have been committed there. Their efforts were directed against the process-server and with what result? That the branch of the league has degenerated, and has even committed sacrilegious acts under the guise of nationality. They have gone into the Catholic Church and brought out pews belonging to the bailiff. I say we are un-Irish and un-Christian, and unworthy of the name of Nationalists if we cannot fight the enemy outside the church. I have come here to withdraw our allegiance from the Ballinderry branch. It is unbecoming of Irishmen and Catholics to resort to such base, treacherous, unmanly tactics. I would not be a man if I did not come here to give expression to my feelings."

What had been the result? The services in Father Newell's church had since been boycotted by his former congregation, who had also refused to pay him his Easter dues. That came from a priest in Ireland who understood the character and nature of the Irish Nationalist League, and this was the organisation which would have absolutely supreme command in Ireland if this law was entirely removed from the Statute-book. This Act pressed

upon no law-abiding Irishman, and if it pressed on the other kind of Irishman, the more it pressed the better.

The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had said that there were two ways of governing Ireland—(1) by coercion, and (2) according to the will and wishes of the Irish people. Did he mean the will and wishes of the kind of Irishmen opposite, or of the kind of Irishmen on the Unionist Benches? If hon. Gentleman opposite were able to get up and say that a great change had taken place in Ireland, that they were conscious, and that the Irish people were conscious, of the immense generosity that had been shown by Great Britain and the House of Commons to the Irish people, and that they were ready to bury the hatchet, and to forget and forgive and not allow their minds to dwell upon those things in the past which they would like to raise—if they said that, there might be some way of meeting them. But he saw no signs of reformation—he saw no signs in the speeches made in the House and elsewhere that the generosity of the House and the country at large, which had showered almost £200,000,000 upon Ireland to help to settle the land question—he saw no signs of any softening of their animosity towards Great Britain. On the contrary, speeches were made on the other side of the House which, far from tending to mollify the existing asperity, roused and kindled anew those animosities which all true Irishmen would like to see obliterated.

He had had some experience of Ireland. His family had dwelt in Ireland for nearly 400 years. He himself had now almost reached the allotted span of life. He had been in the House for many years, and he believed hon. Gentlemen opposite, although they disagreed with him, would believe him when he said he also loved his country, although they saw it from a different point of view. But from his point of view the lesson which the House ought to learn, and any Government ought to take to heart, was that there were two things that ought to be remembered by those who desired to govern Ireland and make it a peaceful country—one was an unswerving enforcement of justice, and the other was to seek the sympathy of

the Irish people. Without law and order they would have those periodical recurrences which all Irishmen ought to regret. But if the Government was animated, as he believed this Government was, by the sentiments he had mentioned, they would lay the final foundation on which the peace, happiness, and prosperity of his country might rest.

MR. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore) said he hoped it would not be considered that he was paying any empty compliment when he said that he was glad to see the hon. and gallant Member in his place once again in the House, because he, at any rate, attempted no mystery upon the House of Commons. He was glad to see him in his place as representing truly, consistently, and straightforwardly the Ascendancy Party and the old Orange policy in the House of Commons. The hon. and gallant Member stood there as representing a Party in Ireland which contended that the majority of the Irish people had no right to be consulted as to the government of their own country. For his own part he preferred the position of the hon. and gallant Member to that of a man who, under any subtle subterfuge, came there to split hairs as to the government of Ireland.

But what, after all, was the question? It was this, that Ireland, alone in the whole British Empire, was singled out as the place that might not have the right of trial by jury. Any broken-down wreck, who might have disgraced himself, as some of them had done, without character, record, or qualification, might be made a resident magistrate, and two of these creatures, dependent for their livelihood on pleasing Dublin Castle, had it in their power to decide whether a Member of that House, or any other man, might or might not be sent to serve various terms of imprisonment, with or without hard labour. But, quite apart from any partisan question whatever, this was a thing that the House sooner or later would have to deal with, and he ventured to say to such Members of the Liberal Party as might be tempted to treat the Irish question as a matter of no account that they would have before long to

seriously consider this as a vital and far-reaching constitutional question. The papers contained columns as to the terrible sufferings of men who went to prison for refusing to pay rates under the Education Act. The people of this country would have to turn their attention sooner and more seriously than they might dream of to the question of Irish Members of this House having to undergo in prison two or three months hard labour under the Coercion Act passed by this Parliament. If there were any Members of the Liberal Party in this House who thought they could trifle with the question of coercion and drop Home Rule, he told them that there were plenty of men on the Irish Benches and elsewhere who would not allow them to do so, and who were going to make this question one of the first magnitude.

It was absolutely scandalous that so little should have been heard in that House in regard to an Act not passed in circumstances of exceptional urgency to meet a special case of public excitement, but passed as a permanent Act. It was a blot on the escutcheon of the British Empire that an Act should have been passed insulting the whole of the Irish people—an Act by which any two swashbucklers and bottlenashers appointed by Dublin Castle might sentence the chairman of an Irish county council, or a Member representing an Irish constituency, to serve for a more or less long term in an Irish prison with hard labour. This Motion dealt with the whole constitutional grievance between Ireland and Great Britain, and even if a guarantee were given that no prosecution could happen under the Act within the lifetime of the youngest man now on those benches, he said without hesitation that the Act would be an outrage and an injustice which it would be their duty to bring before the House whenever they could. It was not a question of the number of prosecutions, or the amount of punishment inflicted; the great cardinal question involved was that the kingdom of Ireland—kingdom was the word used in the Act of Union—was under this exceptional law. So long as that Act endured it would be a standing insult to and outrage on the people of Ireland.

It had been pleaded that this exceptional Act of Parliament was wanted because evidence could not be got to back up the prosecution when a Government prosecution was brought. Might he refer to circumstances which occurred in a place very much nearer the House than Ireland—a part of the kingdom called London. Only two months ago there was a case at the Old Bailey where two men were sentenced to seven years penal servitude for this crime. They waylaid a respectable working man's wife, robbed her, brutally knocked her about, rushed her into a doorway, and violated her. When the sentence was about to be passed a local inspector of police said that these men were only members of a large and well-organised band which had the whole district in terror, and that the great difficulty which the police had to contend with was that they could not get people who were habitually blackmailed and assaulted by these ruffians to come forward and give evidence. Not long ago a respectable factory girl was coming out of a workshop in broad daylight near Trafalgar Square when she was shot and wounded, and the only explanation was that she had given evidence against a bully who had assaulted her. The police had no clue to the offender. He had been making a very careful record of such cases, and, when he had it completed, hon. Members opposite would be surprised to find the number of cases in which inspectors of police in London had come forward time after time before Judges and complained that their difficulty in putting down the ruffianism which was rampant in London was due to the fact that people dared not for the sake of life and limb come forward and give evidence against the offenders. Would the legal Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench bring forward a Suspects Bill for London? Why should they not do so when they had the evidence of the police authorities given before magistrates and Judges that whole districts in London were terrorised, and that evidence could not be procured?

The police records of crime in Ireland, as compared with Great Britain, showed that there was no crime in Ireland worth talking about. In England magistrates from the moment they

were appointed were absolutely independent of Liberal or Tory Government officials. What was the position of the resident magistrate in Ireland? He was appointed by the Lord-Lieutenant, who could dismiss, transfer, or remove him; he was responsible only to Dublin Castle. He was an absolute political hack. There was not a decent clerk in the Post Office who was not more independent of the Government than an Irish resident magistrate. He knew perfectly well that, when he was appointed to try a case under the Coercion Act, if he did not please his master he was liable to go, and probably would go. Looking at this matter from the point of view of the public interest, what was the effect of the Crimes Act? It was to create an absolute contempt for law in Ireland, a justifiable contempt which he shared to the full. It might be said that he had not suffered much. He had not suffered anything to be compared with many of his colleagues, but did hon. Members think that he had forgotten, or that he would ever forget, the outrage that was put on him when he was sentenced by a half-pay officer and a retired policeman to two months hard labour, and three months more if he did not get bail, for going down to his own constituency to address a public meeting? Did they think that that was a sore which would ever cease to rankle and fester in his mind? This was a question which would have to be dealt with as one of privilege. He would advise hon. Members before they talked about the iniquities of Russia, or the evil doings of Turkey, to consider very much more closely than they were doing at the present time what was being done in Ireland. He would advise them not to maintain the hypocrisy of lecturing the Government of St. Petersburg about its autocratic methods while they denied to men serving in that House the constitutional right of addressing their own constituents. This was a matter affecting the rights and privileges not only of Irish Members, but of all Members of the House. On these grounds he heartily supported the Resolution.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara) said the right hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh had quoted isolated

speeches in which strong language had no doubt been used. He did not think the isolated cases which had been referred to by the right hon. and gallant Member could in any way be charged against the national movement. The United Irish League was most strongly opposed to the use of any strong language that might in any way be a hindrance to the work in which it was engaged. Here and there in Ireland speeches were made at times which were reprehensible, and which the Nationalist Members, the Irish people generally, and certainly the organisation with which they were associated, were as anxious to condemn as hon. Members opposite. But in order to justify the statement of his hon. friend the Member for West Donegal that the policy of the Government was tending in the direction of coercion he would quote a letter which appeared in that day's *Freeman's Journal*. It was from the Rev. Canon M'Alpine, and dealt with an article which appeared in the *Dublin Daily Express* a few days ago. The letter was sent to that journal, and a copy of it to the *Freeman's Journal*. It was as follows—

“Mount St. Joseph's, Clifden,
“29th May, 1905.

“To the Editor ‘*Daily Express*.’

“Sir—From an intimate knowledge of the district, from a visit paid to three police stations in the parish, and from an interview with Mr. Glasgow, D.I., R.I.C., I am in a position to state that there is not the smallest particle of truth—that there is absolutely no ground whatever for what appeared in a recent issue of your paper, ‘that here in Clifden a large grazier had unconditionally surrender his grazing farms because his cattle and sheep were found drowned in trenches every day, and his herds refused to work for him, and that other petty little outrages such as wall razing, breaking of gates, etc., had also come to light.’

“In the name of common sense, and for the credit of Irish journalism, may I ask what reason can you give for publishing such lying statements of an innocent people? Clearly, between you and your contemporary the *Irish Times*, a regular rivalry subsists just now on Irish matters as to who will do most in libelling an individual, defaming a district, and maligning a community. Respice finem.—Yours,

“P. CANON M'ALPINE, P.P., V. G.”

It would be clearly understood from that letter that an attempt was being made at the present moment in Ireland to justify the Chief Secretary in introducing

Mr. O'Malley.

once more the old weapon of coercion to cure Irish grievances. But as coercion had been tried for very many years, and had invariably failed, he and his friends on those benches, and the Irish people, would look on with equanimity at the career of the right hon. Gentleman who occupied the position of Chief Secretary at the present time. He believed that at the end of the right hon. Gentleman's career coercion, if he indulged in it, would be ultimately to the advantage of the Irish cause.

He would give another illustration of the new policy which had been inaugurated in the last few weeks in Ireland. It was generally recognised in this House by all Parties that a great many of the ills and sufferings of the Irish people were due to the land problem of the West—due to the fact that the greater portion of the best lands in the West were now in the occupation of graziers, while the tenants in Connemara, Mayo, Donegal, Sligo, and other western counties, were trying to eke out an existence on the non-economic holdings surrounding the large tracts of grazing lands. When the Land Act of 1903 was passing through the House the late Chief Secretary fully recognised the evil, and stated that the Act was calculated and intended to remove it. The people of Ireland were flying from the country now in greater numbers than in recent years, and, in view of the poverty of the country and the periodic famines which occurred there, it was not surprising that violent speeches should be made from time to time at political meetings. That condition of things was undoubtedly due to the fact that the land problem of the West was still unsolved, and that something must be done to enlarge the non-economic holdings by taking from the graziers the lands which they now held, and handing them over to the tenants. Therefore the Irish people, very naturally and properly, through their organisation, were directing all their efforts to that end.

During the previous week there occurred in his constituency a case which he would refer to particularly. In the village of Glann, near Oughterard, a miserable mountain district where every tenant was living

on a non-economic holding, and barely eking out an existence, there were some grass farms. These grass farms were reclaimed by the hard labour and sweat of tenants who were evicted some years ago. One of these grass farms was in the hands of a man named Patrick O'Toole who lived twenty or twenty-five miles away from the place. He was a shopkeeper and a bailiff, and, being a bailiff, he was a handy man to the landlord of the district. He was made a justice of the peace some years ago. He was able to pay a high price for the grass farm which he held on the eleven months system. The Glann and Oughterard branch of the United Irish League met, and very properly considered the advisability of Mr. O'Toole giving up his grass farm. The secretary wrote Mr. O'Toole a letter, to which he begged hon. Members opposite to listen, because it threw light on the western problem and the policy which the Government were at present pursuing. The letter was in the following terms—

“Glann and Oughterard,

“U. I. League,

“April 12th, 1905.

“SIR,—At a meeting of the above held at the League Rooms, Oughterard, on the 9th inst., a resolution was adopted calling on all grazing tenants holding grazing lands in the parish to surrender same on or before next May, in the interest of poor tenants holding uneconomic holdings, we have to ask you are you prepared to surrender your Glann farm within the time mentioned.

“A reply from you is expected on or before Thursday, 20th inst.

B. RUTLEDGE }
W. McDONOGH } Hon. Secs., U. I. L.

“To Mr. Patrick O'Toole, J.P., Annaghvane, Connemara.”

There was no strong language used in that letter. It was an invitation to Mr. O'Toole to give up his grass farm in the interest of the poor tenants of the district. What happened? Mr. O'Toole handed the letter to a policeman [Cries of “Hear, Hear” from Conservative Members] and Mr. Rutledge was arrested and brought before the stipendiary magistrate, who had accepted bail of £100, with two sureties of £50 each, for his appearance at the next Galway Assizes. Probably that was legal, but all he could say was that the next time

he was in Connemara he should refer to this case, he would not write a letter to Mr. O'Toole, but he would denounce Mr. O'Toole, and all the other Mr. O'Tooles who held these grass farms, and let the Government prosecute him if they liked. If legitimate action of that sort had not been taken in Ireland during the last twenty-five or thirty years he should like to know where the Irish question would be to-day. He merely rose for the purpose of drawing attention to this particular case. He had no doubt that this man would be tried before the assizes and that he would probably get a year or two's imprisonment. But the very fact that he was sent to prison would constitute him a hero in the eyes of the whole of the Irish people. If that was the way Ireland was to be governed then, he maintained, the hostility which existed between England and Ireland would continue, and the Irish problem would remain unsolved. He hoped the Chief Secretary would not pursue this career of coercion which he was entering upon, and that the right hon. Gentleman would not take the advice of the Irish representatives, led by the right hon. Member for North Armagh, who sat behind him. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to take a lesson from the past; but if the right hon. Gentleman indulged in his career of coercion he believed it would be ultimately to the advantage of the Irish cause.

*MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.) said he wished, in a few sentences, to state the reasons which would induce him to vote in favour of the Motion, as upon many occasions he and those who sat with him had voted for similar Resolutions in the past. He could not recollect in his Parliamentary experience any Government measure which met with a resistance so strenuous and so relentless as the Crimes Bill of 1887 did from the Opposition of that day. Parliamentary conditions were harder then than now. They had no 12 o'clock rule; and he remembered how that Bill was fought line by line and word by word night after night, up to 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, in one of the hottest summers on record. It was to meet that strenuous and pitiless resistance that the expedient of closure

by compartments was first invented. Looking back to the circumstances of that time after nearly twenty years, he wished to record his conviction that never was there an opposition better warranted by the circumstances of the case, or one that would be more properly repeated on the same scale if similar occasion arose.

Speaking for those who belonged to the Liberal Party, why did they then, and why did they now, contemplate with such peculiar repugnance this special piece of legislation? The answer was very simple. It was because the Crimes Act of 1887 embodied, and so long as it remained on the Statute-book would continue to embody, two principles which in their view as Liberals were foreign to the spirit and to the very genesis of our Constitution. In the first place, it put into the hands of the Irish Executive a discretionary power, practically unlimited both in point of space and in point of time, to suspend in Ireland some of the elementary safeguards of personal liberty. In the second place, and he was not sure that this was not even more important, it conferred that power not in regard only to a special emergency, of the gravity of which Parliament could judge, when the occasion arose, upon the evidence; but it conferred that power as one of the everyday ordinary weapons in the armoury of the Executive, and as part and parcel of the permanent law of the land. There had been occasions in the history, not only of Ireland, but of Great Britain, when it could be plausibly argued—he did not say convincingly—that such an exceptional state of things had been created that the ordinary machinery of the law, however well adapted to normal conditions, required to be supplemented and strengthened and made more summary in its operation. He did not think that experiments made in that spirit had been particularly successful in their results. But even in the darkest days of reaction, of Sidmouth and of Castlereagh,

Mr. Asquith.

the most high-flying of ministers always recognised that it was for Parliament to decide in each particular case whether such an expedient was necessary. The authors of this legislation had for the first time boldly put aside all our constitutional traditions and principles. It was reserved to them to propose that, for instance, the question whether trial by jury in regard to certain classes of offences should absolutely cease to exist, should for all time be left to the uncontrolled discretion of the Irish Executive. People talked about governing Ireland according to Irish ideas. Let them think of governing Ireland according to English ideas. Was there a single Member in this House who in any stress of emergency would permanently entrust the Executive sitting on the Front Bench opposite, from whatever Party it was selected, with any such power with regard to the liberties of Englishmen?

He thought his hon. friend was justified in asking the House in the terms of his Motion to say that this Crimes Act was in principle an unconstitutional measure. It might be said that this was only a theoretical objection, that it was an academic point. The epithet “academic” might as well be applied to some of the noblest and most notable protests ever made in that House, by Pym and Burke and others, which in these days Englishmen without distinction of Party looked back upon with pride and gratitude. But he was not afraid to push the matter a step further. If they dismissed these constitutional points as being merely theoretical, he would ask this question:—Had the legislation of 1887 been justified by its fruits? They were often told that the restoration of order in particular districts in Ireland had been due to the existence of this law and the exercise by the Executive of the powers which it conveyed. He confessed that he himself was sceptical about there being any demonstrable relation between the

alleged cause and the alleged effect. He was perfectly certain that if what might be called the police and magisterial side of Irish administration during the last eighteen years had been conducted upon the same methods and in the same spirit as in England and Scotland, the foundations of social order would have been infinitely less liable to disturbance. Hon. Members who sat on his side of the House were as anxious as anyone on the Treasury Bench could be that the law should be enforced, that order should be maintained, and that personal liberty should be safeguarded in Ireland. But they parted company with those who originated this legislation, and those who now defended it, when they came to talk of means and methods. From the point of view of practical administration it seemed to him that the Crimes Act, so far from removing, had gratuitously aggravated the difficulties of Irish government.

What was the root-difficulty in the administration of the law in Ireland? What was it? How did it arise? How was it to be accounted for? No one would have the hardihood to assert that the Irish people sympathised with crime. Their criminal statistics, compared with the statistics of England and Scotland, were extremely favourable to them. The difficulty was, as everyone knew whose eyes were not blinded by prejudice, not that the Irish people were in sympathy with crime, but that they were out of sympathy with the methods and Ministers of the law. In England and Scotland, and, he thought he might say almost without qualification, in every other part of His Majesty's dominions throughout the British Empire, the vast majority of the people looked upon the

agents and officers of the law as their friends and fellow-workers. In Ireland, too often in the past, too often now, the exact contrary was the case. What was the remedy? Surely it was not to do what the authors of this legislation did, to clothe the officers of the Executive in a country where they had already this antecedent antipathy between the bulk of the population and the administrators of the law, with extraordinary and extra-legal powers, the result of which must be, as they predicted in 1887; and as every succeeding year had shown, to widen and deepen the chasm, already, as Heaven knew, wide and deep enough, between the law on the one side and the people on the other. He expressed his own deliberate opinion when he said that no worse service was ever done to the cause of order in Ireland than the enactment of this statute. The remedy was to be looked for in an entirely opposite direction. It was to establish, or re-establish, if they could, in Ireland that harmonious co-operation between popular sentiment on the one side and Executive authority on the other, which, in the long run, as all experience showed, was the only effective security for the maintenance of order. It was to endeavour to bring about in Ireland what had been brought about spontaneously in almost every other part of His Majesty's dominions, the reconciliation of those two forces which in Ireland, and in Ireland alone, were permanently estranged the one from the other. A strong ruler, and there was an immeasurable difference between strength and noise, would, if he were wise, look in that direction and not either to the enactment or the enforcement of provisions such as those of the Crimes Act for the real solution of the difficulty which vexed the

right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, which vexed his predecessors, and which would vex his successors until at last the Parliament of this country recognised the essential conditions of Irish government.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.) said the right hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the House declared that there was an immeasurable difference between strength and noise. Many of those who listened to the right hon. Gentleman, whose memories of the past history of legislation in that House were not so short as his appeared to be, must have had irresistibly brought to their minds the conviction that there was a still greater difference between words and actions. The right hon. Gentleman had made one of the most remarkable speeches to which he had ever listened. He had declared, if his words meant anything, that the Party of which he was a distinguished and leading member were pledged to the repeal of this measure. And in justification of that declaration he had reminded the House that he and the Party with which he was associated offered to the Crimes Act the most strenuous opposition of which they were capable. But what a commentary on the Parliamentary action of the right hon. Gentleman and his Party! Since that Act was passed had the right hon. Gentleman and his Party had no opportunity of translating words into action?

*MR. ASQUITH: None whatever.

MR. WALTER LONG said the right hon. Gentleman interjected "None what—
Mr. Asquith.

ever." But for three years the right hon. Gentleman and his friends were responsible for the government of the country; for three years it rested with them to repeal that legislation, if they had thought it desirable, which he had declared was the most injurious to the best interests of Ireland that had ever been passed. Why did not he and his friends do it?

*MR. ASQUITH: During the whole of those three years the Act, under the administration of my right hon. friend, remained a dead letter, and no one knows better than the right hon. Gentleman that, although it takes two Houses of Parliament to pass an Act, the veto of one House would prevent its repeal.

MR. WALTER LONG said they now heard the strong man in support of his own argument. He thought the right hon. Gentleman was worthy of a better line of argument than that. He fell back on the other Chamber. If the right hon. Gentleman believed that this Act of Parliament was the greatest wrong ever done to Ireland he might at all events have tried to repeal it. Instead of trusting to what he believed the other House would have done, he might at least have invited the House of Commons to repeal the Act. The right hon. Gentleman had another argument, and a still more interesting one. The right hon. Gentleman had a holy horror of "law and order perorations." He would have thought that the right hon. Gentleman would have been the last man in the House to find fault with perorations. He had always regarded him as a master in the art of peroration, and, as he was for a time a distinguished head of the Home Office

he had also looked upon him as a strong Minister prepared to enforce the law. If the right hon. Gentleman found fault with law and order perorations, it could only be, not because he disapproved of law and order, but, because he disapproved of the form of the peroration. That ought to be to a Gentleman exceptionally endowed with the gifts of oratory a matter for sympathy rather than condemnation. This was not the only Irish subject which the right hon. Gentleman looked upon with some dislike; he had been rather chary about his references to Home Rule, and he thought they could set the one against the other. For his own part he was not ashamed of anything he had said in regard to the maintenance of order in Ireland. His withers were unwrung even under the condemnation of the right hon. Gentleman, in regard to what he had said either inside or outside this House in regard to the maintenance of law and order in Ireland.

The right hon Gentleman said that the enactment and retention on the Statute-book of this statute was in itself an insult to Ireland and an injury to Ireland, and that it estranged Ireland and Great Britain. The right hon. Gentleman gave as a second reason for the inaction of himself and his colleagues that, under the administration—let him say the strong, the independent, and courageous administration—of the Member for Newcastle, now the hon. Member for Montrose, there was no resort to the Crimes Act, and, therefore, it was not necessary to repeal it. That was a curious argument, but in the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman it was not the administration of the Act which had been represented as an insult to Ireland, but its presence on the Statute-book. [An

HON. MEMBER on the IRISH benches: It is an insult.] The right hon. Gentleman said that the presence of this Act on the Statute-book was the cause of the estrangement between England and Ireland. But that was not the argument that had been put forward below the gangway. The argument put forward had been that a new policy had been adopted in Ireland, and that the present Chief Secretary had embarked upon a policy of coercion.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said that last year when the right hon. Member for Dover was Chief Secretary the same Motion was proposed, and they on the Irish Benches said then that the presence of this law on the Statute-book was an insult to Ireland.

MR. WALTER LONG said he was quite aware of that, and of the fact that the same charges were made against the Chief Secretary then as now, though the then Chief Secretary was extolled as the apostle of conciliation and the present Chief Secretary was denounced. That did not alter the argument he was addressing to the House. Repeal of the Crimes Act had been advocated on the ground that the presence of the Act was in itself an insult. How was it an insult?

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E): It suspends the Constitution.

MR. WALTER LONG said that if it suspended the Constitution, why did not hon. Gentlemen opposite repeal it when they had the opportunity? How could the presence of the Act on the Statute-book be an insult to Ireland if the Act

at present was not employed, and if it could only be employed in circumstances which made it absolutely impossible to deal with what some people opposite said was not crime, but what he certainly held to be one of the most insidious, difficult, and dangerous forms of crime. It had been said with perfect truth that the condition of Ireland to-day showed a marked improvement. That was a fact at which all must rejoice, and all must desire to see the improvement maintained. He was not going to contest the proposition that this was an exceptional Act or to argue whether or not it had a parallel in other countries, because that did not seem germane to the discussion. The Act was placed on the Statute-book to enable the Government to deal with forms of crime which required exceptional powers to deal with them; and he confessed that when he heard speeches from right hon. Gentlemen opposite denouncing the Act, when he remembered that they had had the chance of repealing it and did not do so, and that their own Act of 1882 gave them powers to deal with every one of these difficulties in the same drastic way, he thought it was a little bit dangerous for those who might be responsible, and who, indeed, seemed to think they would very soon be responsible, for the government of this country, to declare, as they had declared that night, that they were prepared to strip themselves of those powers.

What was the actual position they had to consider? He knew that hon. Gentlemen opposite contested the value and accuracy of figures connected with agrarian outrages. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Always; they are bogus.]

Mr. Walter Long.

He would not take that observation seriously. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: You took Sheridan seriously.] He could show from figures that certain classes of agrarian crime had increased in number. He could show, though it might be difficult to realise it, that the amount of grass land unlet to-day as compared with this time last year was very much larger. The significance of that was to be found in this—that one of the beneficent results which it was hoped would follow from the Land Act of 1903 was the division of the grazing land amongst the holders of uneconomic holdings. That was the object which hon. Gentlemen opposite said they had in view, and it had been enthusiastically advocated by speakers in Ireland. [AN HON. MEMBER: And by the Government when they were passing the Act.] It was one of the objects of the Act, and a legitimate object; but it depended on how they attempted to achieve it. If they attempted to achieve it by forcing grazing tenants by the tyrannical methods of intimidation and terrorism to quit their holdings, they were doing something which was altogether wrong, which could not be justified, and with which the law was bound to interfere. Take the resolutions passed by the various branches of the United Irish League. They had for their object the breaking up of grazing land. He knew that hon. Members opposite described the statistics which he had given as bogus, and as being an improper test to apply to ascertain the condition of things in Ireland.

This, however, was not a question to be decided by the number and character of crimes committed in parts of Ireland as compared with parts of England, or in

one part of Ireland as compared with another part. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife told them with absolute truth that it was not by this test that they could decide. He said there must be in the country an acceptance by the people of the laws under which they were governed. If the right hon. Gentleman accepted the logical conclusion of that argument—if he accepted the policy of Home Rule in its completeness—the argument was sufficient for his purpose. But if he did not accept the logical conclusion of Home Rule his argument was a mere delusion for himself and an attempt on his part and of those who followed him to deceive the country as to the real issues before it. He did not blame the hon. Members below the gangway opposite for cheering the sentiment that we could not govern the country unless the people were prepared to accept the laws by which we governed them. That was the view they had consistently held with great ability and at great sacrifice in and out of season, in ill luck and in good luck. But that was not the view held on the benches opposite except in isolated parts. It would be interesting to know whether they were prepared to surrender all attempt to govern Ireland according to existing conditions and to govern it under Home Rule conditions. The right hon. Gentleman's views were in no degree shared on the Government side. He quoted the language of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who two years ago admitted that Ireland was contented and peaceful, but said—

“You may have a recurrence of past incidents, you may again have a condition of things under which you cannot govern the country without this legislation, and therefore I will be no party to its repeal.”

Not being prepared to govern the country according to Home Rule views, they said the House could not be asked to repeal a statute of this kind until not only terrorism, outrage, and crime were repudiated, but until it was recognised that in order to secure the successful working of the land legislation there must be steadfast abstention from anything like illegal action. So long as people were not prepared to reinforce the law by their active support and sympathy so long would it be impossible to ask this House to remove an Act of Parliament which the Executive Government might require in times of stress and difficulty not for the suppression but for the protection of the liberties of the people.

He denied that the Act involved suspension of the liberties of the people. There was an entire failure on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite to realise the condition of things with which from time to time they were face to face in Ireland. It was said that the Government were animated solely by a desire to protect the rights and property of the landowning class. Was that the class mainly affected by the agitation now going on in Ireland? Was there nothing to be said for the tenant-farmer who desired, within the law, to occupy the holding which in many cases he and his family had held for many years, out of which he thought he could make a fair living and for which he was prepared to pay a fair rent? Was nothing to be said about the form of coercion which sought to compel him to give up that holding for no other reason than that some of his neighbours would rather have the land for someone else. They desired to make the land more available for

distribution, and that, wherever possible, uneconomic holdings should be made economic, but it was not to be tolerated that these objects should be attained by reprehensible and illegal means. The time had not yet arrived when they could with justice and with wisdom remove this particular Act from the Statute-book, and he asked the House to resist the Motion. He believed that a great improvement was going on in the condition of Ireland. He agreed with his hon. and gallant friend the Member for North Armagh—whose return to the House they all so heartily welcomed, and whose complete restoration to health and strength they all hoped for—that there were signs of a return of prosperity and contentment amongst the people of Ireland. That condition of things would be strengthened if the people of Ireland realised that within the maintenance of the law there was to be found not merely protection for the property of the rich but also protection for the property and the liberties of the poor. When that lesson had been learned the House might be asked to repeal the Crimes Act, but not now could that repeal be justified; and he therefore asked the House to reject the Motion.

MR. DILLON said that since the Union eighty-three Coercion Acts had been passed, but there were peculiarities attaching to the existing Act that specially justified the Motion. This was the first of the kind to be made perpetual, and it was the first that upon its introduction had been resisted by one of the great English Parties. That made no difference in the manner in which it was regarded by the Irish people, but the moral sanction that the agreement of both Parties gave was wanting in the existing Act. How

futile was it for the Government to attempt to maintain the Act in face of the declaration of the Opposition that they would take the first opportunity to remove the Act from the Statute-book! In the face of such a declaration it could only be to irritate and exasperate the Irish people that the Government persisted in maintaining the Act. The Liberal Party did not repeal the Act in 1894, because if they could have passed Home Rule the Coercion Act would have been automatically repealed, but they governed Ireland without coercion, and when the present Government returned to power they were for a time ashamed to use the Act. He contended that the Coercion Act was passed in dishonour and forced through the House, the members of the Government being parties to the conspiracy. Pigott and *The Times* entered into the foulest conspiracy that was ever concocted against the liberties of the Irish people, and this Act was the child of that conspiracy. The right hon. Gentleman had made a lame defence against the charges brought against his Administration, and he charged him with being a party to a change of policy in Ireland that had encouraged the propaganda of bogus charges.

MR. WALTER LONG gave an emphatic contradiction to the statement. There was no foundation whatever for any charge of the kind, and he reminded the hon. Member that the statistics of crime were compiled by the police. He would remind the hon. Member that the statistics of crime had to pass through the Office of the Under-Secretary for Ireland, and therefore the accusation that they were bogus charges lay against the Under-Secretary as well as himself.

Mr. Walter Long.

Mr. DILLON said that it was not the statistics of crime, but the Answers given by the right hon. Gentleman himself in the House that he referred to. As an illustration of what he meant he cited the case of Mr. Persse, about whose adventure the newspapers in this country had rung. What was the history of the attack upon Mr. Persse's house. The newspapers of this country rang with the details of this atrocious outrage, and it was said that a body of armed men attacked Mr. Persse's house and fired into it through the windows. It was said that a brave English lady handed a double-barrelled gun to Mr. Persse, who rushed out of the house and blazed away right and left at the invaders. This account of the incident went all over England. They put Questions in the House about it, and they were told that

the case was being carefully inquired into by the police. For weeks that account of the story was allowed to do duty without any official contradiction. What had turned out to be the case? That the whole story from beginning to end was a deliberate invention, invented by Lord Ashtown and his gang of liars who were organised for the purpose of blackening the reputation of Ireland. It was not on account of the official statistics that he blamed the right hon. Gentleman, but what he did blame him for was that by his Answers and by his silence he gave countenance to those infamous charges and encouraged this campaign of bogus outrages.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 106 ; Noes 163. (Division List, No. 191.)

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)	Gilhooly, James	Murphy, John
Ainsworth, John Stirling	Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John	Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Ambrose, Robert	Goddard, Daniel Ford	Norman, Henry
Ashton, Thomas Gair	Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E. (Berwick)	O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry	Hammond, John	O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)	Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)	O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.	Hayden, John Patrick	O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
Bell, Richard	Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.	O'Conner, T. P. (Liverpool)
Blake, Edward	Henderson, Arthur (Durham)	O'Dowd, John
Boland, John	Isaacs, Rufus Daniel	O'Malley, William
Brigg John	Johnson, John	O'Mara, James
Bright, Allan Heywood	Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)	O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn	Kilbride, Denis	Parrott, William
Caldwell, James	Lamont, Norman	Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)	Law, Hugh Alex (Donegal, W.)	Purvis, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.	Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)	Reddy, M.
Causton, Richard Knight	Layland-Barratt, Francis	Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Cheetham, John Frederick	Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)	Rickett, J. Compton
Clancy, John Joseph	Leigh, Sir Joseph	Roberts John Bryn (Eifion)
Cremer, William Randal	Lough, Thomas	Robson, William Snowdon
Dalziel, James Henry	Lundon, W.	Roche, John
Delany, William	Lyell, Charles Henry	Roe, Sir Thomas
Dillon, John	MacNeill, John Gordon Swift	Runciman, Walter
Doogan, P. C.	MacVeagh, Jeremiah	Shackleton, David James
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)	M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)	Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Duncan, J. Hastings	M'Crae, George	Shipman, Dr. John S.
Emmott, Alfred	M'Hugh, Patrick A.	Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)	M'Kean, John	Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Fenwick, Charles	M'Kenna, Reginald	Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)	Mansfield, Horace Rendall	Sullivan, Donal
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, NE)	Markham, Arthur Basil	Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Flavin, Michael Joseph	Mooney, John J.	Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Flynn, James Christopher	Morley, Rt. Hn. J. (Montrose)	

Tomkinson, James
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)

Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
Young, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
Patrick O'Brien and Mr.
Haviland-Burke.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hon. Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harwood
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir Michael Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Worc.)
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C. R.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Fellowes, Rt. Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manch'r)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inverness B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, J. (Londonderry, S.)

Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gretton, John
Groves, James Grimble
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Marq. of (Lond'nderry)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heath, Sir James (Stafford NW)
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Hunt, Rowland
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monmouth)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks NR)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Bristol, S)
Lowe, Francis William
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdonald, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maconochie, A. W.
MacArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
MacIver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W)
MacKillop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
Morgan, David J. (Walthamstow)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, George Herbert

Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretymann, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Saunderson, Rt. Hon. Col. Edw. J.
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, H. C. (North'mbTyneside)
Smith, Rt. Hon. J. Parker (Lanarks)
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tuff, Charles
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson-Todd, Sir Wm. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
Alexander Acland-Hood and
Viscount Valentia.

STANDING COMMITTEE (ACTION OF
CHAIRMAN).

Order for resuming adjourned
debate on Question [4th April]

read, and discharged. Motion with-
drawn.

Adjourned at a quarter after
Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 1st June, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Mansfield Corporation Bill [Lords]; Whitby Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Bolton Corporation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

North Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

Caledonian Railway Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Clyde Navigation (Reconstitution) Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

North British Railway (General Powers) Bill; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]; Sheffield University Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Barry Railway Bill [Lords]. Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Shropshire, Staffordshire, and Worcestershire Electric Power Bill (changed from "Shropshire and Worcestershire Electric Power Bill"). Reported, with Amendments [Title amended]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Lands Valuation (Scotland) Bill. Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [28th March] further adjourned from To-morrow till Friday, 30th June.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POLICE ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relative to the refusal of the Secretary of State's Certificate under Section 17 (2) of the Act to the River Tyne Police Force for the year ended 29th September, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

AMERICAN MAIL SERVICE.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 17th May; *Sir John Leng*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 185.]

P

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREW'S.

Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University for the year ended 30th September, 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 186.]

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREW'S.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrew's for the year 1903-4 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 187.]

TREATY SERIES (No. 14, 1905).

Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and Austria-Hungary providing for the settlement by Arbitration of certain Classes of Questions which may arise between the respective Governments. Signed at London, 11th January, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 15, 1905).

Copy presented, of Treaty between the United Kingdom and Cuba for the Mutual Surrender of Fugitive Criminals. Signed at Havana, 3rd October, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3387 to 3389 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LEAD POISONING IN EARTHENWARE AND CHINA WORKS.

Address for "Return of the cases of Lead Poisoning reported as occurring in

China and Earthenware Works during the years 1899 to 1904, showing (1) the number of cases in the several classes of works and in the various processes, the number of persons employed in 1900 and 1904, and the proportion of cases to persons employed; (2) the number of cases occurring in each month of the year; (3) particulars as to the character of the attacks; (4) the number of persons suspended in certain districts by the certifying surgeons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 103, of Session 1904)."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.

Address for "Copy of the Workmen's Compensation Acts, 1897 and 1900, showing the Amendments proposed to be made by the Workmen's Compensation Bill as brought from the Lords."—(*Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.Dockyard Staffs—Established and
Hired Men.

MR. DUKE (Plymouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty the numbers of established and hired men respectively employed in each of the several Royal dockyards in June, 1893, June, 1903, and the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The numbers asked for are as follows:—

Dockyard.	1st June, 1893.		1st June, 1903.		Present time.	
	Established.	Hired.	Established.	Hired.	Established.	Hired.
Chatham - -	1,333	4,405	1,392	8,250	1,620	7,516
Sheerness - -	584	1,256	644	2,002	612	2,105
Portsmouth -	1,887	5,386	1,955	9,276	2,087	8,803
Devonport - -	1,488	3,707	1,488	9,116	1,809	7,550
Pembroke - -	503	1,382	515	2,270	583	2,378
Haulbowline -	1	109	54	590	70	592
West India Docks	26	100	26	205	36	195

Opening of Charing Cross End of Processional Road.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, when the Processional Road will be opened through to Charing Cross.

(Answered by Lord Balcarres.) The First Commissioner regrets that he is unable to fix any date for the opening of the Mall into Charing Cross. It must entirely depend upon the completion of the buildings at that end of the Mall.

Sea Fisheries Regulations in the Lancashire District.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he is aware that since the Lancashire and Western Sea Fisheries Committee has been at work at public expense the yield of fish has been greatly diminished in the area covered by that Committee, that acres of cockles have been left to rot, and that foreign shrimps are being sold in Southport; and whether, in view of the distress among the native fishermen, who are not allowed to take the fish, which are plentiful, he proposes to take any and, if so, what action in the matter.

(Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.) The Board have no reason to believe from the statistics before them that there has been any such diminution in the yield of fish in the area of the Lancashire and Western Sea Fisheries District as is suggested in the hon. Member's Question. The initiative in making or altering regulations affecting the sea fisheries in that district rests with the Local Fisheries Committee; but I shall be glad to bring under their notice any representations on the subject which the hon. Member may desire to make.

Small Holdings in Scotland.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state how many proprietors have, during the last financial year, proposed to break up farm lands, in order that they may be divided up into holdings suitable for crofter and cottar tenants on their estates; and will he state the names of the counties in which the farms referred to are respectively situated, and the number in each county.

(Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.) I regret I cannot give the hon. Member the information he desires. In cases where proprietors make proposals to the Board negotiations must be confidential until they are adjusted.

Reports of North Sea Fisheries Investigation.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state when the Reports showing the share taken by this country in the North Sea Fisheries investigation will be laid upon the Table of the House.

(Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.) The printing of the Reports is in an advanced state, and their publication is expected at no distant date.

Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes.

MR. GRETTON (Derbyshire, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury why the clerks to the surveyors of taxes are not established Civil servants and examined in open competition as in other departments; and whether confidential work is entrusted to them.

(Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.) The system of employing established clerks has been tried, but was abandoned as being unsatisfactory both as regards cost and efficiency. The surveyors of taxes are expected to retain in their own hands all really confidential work.

Acceptance of Irish Bank Notes at English Post Offices.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General why notes issued by the Bank of Ireland are not accepted in payment by the post offices in England; and if he is prepared to make a regulation on the subject by which Irish visitors would be spared the inconvenience resulting from this practice.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) Irish bank notes are not in general circulation in England, and, if accepted at an English post office, the postmaster would have difficulty in disposing of them. I cannot see my way to direct any alteration of practice.

Holloway and Mount Pleasant Postal Factories—Employees under Notice of Dismissal owing to Age Limit.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state the

number of unestablished employees of over twenty years continuous service at the Holloway and Mount Pleasant Postal Factories who are now under notice of dismissal owing to age limit; and whether any provision can be made for them, considering that they do not come within the scope of the Superannuation Acts.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am inquiring into the matter referred to in the hon. Member's Question, and I will communicate the result to him.

Trade Marks Registered in Great Britain.

SIR WALTER PALMER (Salisbury): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he can state what is the total number of trade marks now registered in Great Britain, respectively, in London, Sheffield, and Manchester, and of this number how many belong to persons or firms existing outside the British Empire, and to what countries they belong.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The total number of marks registered at the

Patent Office from 1st January, 1876, to 31st December, 1904, was 110,775, of which number 3,110 were registered in the Sheffield register, and 13,263 were registered in respect of cotton marks in Classes 23, 24, and 25. Of the above total 24,910 had been removed from the register at that date, leaving 85,865 still on the register. The number of Sheffield marks and cotton marks removed from the register is not known. No record has been kept of the numbers of the registered marks belonging to owners of different nationalities.

Wine, Beer, Spirits, and Tobacco—Rates of Duty, Revenue Realised, and Consumption per Head.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state what were the rates of duty, the total amount of revenue realised, the total consumption, and the consumption per head of population of wine, beer, spirits, and tobacco during each of the last seven financial years.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*):

Wine.

Year.	Rate of Duty per Gallon.	Net Receipt of Revenue.	Total Consumption.	Consumption per head of population.
		£	Gallons.	Gallons.
1898-9	1s. and 2s. 6d. (In bottle, sparkling, 2s. additional)	1,399,100	16,864,992	0·42
1899-1900-	In cask, 1s. 3d. and 3s. In bottle, still, 2s. 3d. and 4s. In bottle, sparkling, 3s. 9d. and 5s. 6d.	1,729,540	17,148,183	0·42
1900-01	As in 1899-1900	1,488,453	15,088,155	0·37
1901-2	As in 1899-1900	1,449,687	14,865,530	0·36
1902-3	As in 1899-1900	1,523,856	15,399,432	0·37
1903-4	As in 1899-1900	1,335,792	13,442,206	0·32
1904-5	As in 1899-1900	1,185,508	11,912,892	0·28

Beer.

Year.	Rate of Duty per Barrel.	Net Receipt of Revenue.	Total Consumption.	Consumption per head of population.
	<i>s.</i> <i>d.</i>	£	Barrels.	Gallons.
1898-9 - - -	6 9	12,103,373	35,854,737	31·96
1899-1900 - - -	6 9	13,364,239	36,626,884	32·32
1900-01 - - -	7 9	13,963,409	36,044,736	31·53
1901-2 - - -	7 9	13,741,628	35,442,404	30·71
1902-3 - - -	7 9	13,729,962	35,425,279	30·39
1903-4 - - -	7 9	13,483,676	34,790,696	29·55
1904-5 - - -	7 9	13,123,679	33,862,068	28·12

Spirits.

Year.	Rate of Duty per Gallon.	Net Receipt of Revenue.	Total Consumption.	Consumption per head of population.
	<i>s.</i> <i>d.</i>	£	Gallons.	Gallons.
1898-9 - - -	10 6	22,408,085	42,462,024	1·05
1899-1900 - - -	10 6	25,436,457	48,025,415	1·18
1900-01 - - -	11 0	25,111,790	45,360,918	1·10
1901-2 - - -	11 0	23,281,286	42,049,074	1·01
1902-3 - - -	11 0	23,988,331	43,315,748	1·03
1903-4 - - -	11 0	23,329,064	42,168,021	0·99
1904-5 - - -	11 0	22,132,407	40,076,652	0·93

Tobacco.

Year.	Rate of Duty per Pound.	Net Receipt of Revenue.	Total Consumption.	Consumption per head of population.
	<i>s.</i> <i>d.</i>	£	lbs.	lbs.
1898-9 - - -	2 8	10,993,727	79,415,313	1·97
1899-1900 - - -	2 8	10,885,922	79,047,155	1·94
1900-01 - - -	3 0	12,838,578	83,561,083	2·03
1901-2 - - -	3 0	10,567,705	68,595,176	1·65
1902-3 - - -	3 0	12,451,473	81,132,884	1·93
1903-4 - - -	3 0	12,627,059	82,507,836	1·95
1904-5 - - -	3 0	13,184,767	83,374,670	1·95

Only the main rates of duty are specified in the second column of the foregoing tables.

Action of Mr. Craven, Sub-Divisional Officer at Habigunj, Sylhet, Assam.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will cause inquiry to be made into the proceedings of Mr. Craven, the sub-divisional officer of Habigunj, Sylhet, Assam, in connection with a recent dispute between two zemindars, and to the strictures passed on his proceedings by the High Court.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.)

I have no reason to suppose that the Local Government or the Government of India have not taken, or will not take, adequate notice of the case referred to in the Question, and I do not propose to order an inquiry.

Sentence on Native Tramway Conductor at Alipore.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances under which the Alipore Joint Magistrate recently imposed two months rigorous imprisonment and a fine of fifteen rupees on Husain Raza, a native tramway conductor, for alleged assault on Captain Ronayne on March 30th last, notwithstanding the fact that the conductor complained of serious maltreatment at the hands of the prosecutor.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.)

I have read the judgment in the case as printed in the newspapers. The sentence on Husain Raza appears to have been two weeks, not two months, imprisonment. The Courts are open to anyone who considers himself aggrieved by the decision, and I do not see that any good purpose could be served by ordering an inquiry.

Compensation to Officers of the Goorkhas for Loss Caused by Earthquake in Dharmsala.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the losses of the British officers of the 1st Goorkhas from the earthquake in Dharm-sala; whether he is aware that the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Regiments of Goorkhas were given a guarantee that the stations originally assigned to them should never be changed without their consent; that

Dharm-sala thus became the permanent headquarters of the 1st, and, when their second battalion was raised in 1886, the expansion of the cantonment was carried out with the knowledge that the regiment as a whole was assured of its fixed location; that accordingly the British officers purchased houses, and a mess house was eventually provided equal to the requirements of a double battalion; that in the latter instance debentures were taken up by the officers, the Government advancing such money as was required; and, seeing that the earthquake has wrecked the mess house and the private residences, and that this means little short of ruin to the officers, while all have to face liabilities over the mess, there being outstanding debentures of about 32,000 rupees, whether the Government of India will afford relief to the officers.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.)

I am aware that in some cases a guarantee has been given that Goorkhas shall remain permanently at their stations. Otherwise I am not in a position to reply to this Question which is, in effect, an amplification of a previous Question to which I replied on May 30th.† The Government of India have the subject under consideration, and, as I then said, any proposals which they may submit will be favourably regarded.

Marine Works in County Mayo.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can yet state when the marine works which have been sanctioned under the Marine Works (Ireland) Act, are likely to be commenced in county Mayo.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) I am not yet in a position to make a definite statement on this subject.

Brown Hall Estate Grazing Lands.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Congested Districts Board, instead of dividing the grazing land on the Brown Hall Estate, which they purchased over two years ago, are this

† See page 231.

year taking in grazing cattle; and whether he will see that immediate steps will be taken by the Board to have the fences made so as to enable the tenants to put their cattle on these lands.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Cattle have been taken by the Congested Districts Board for grazing on the Brown Hall Estate, until the arrangements for the disposal of the lands have been completed. The fencing must await the completion of these arrangements.

Conacre and Turbary on the Brown Hall Estate.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the tenants on the Brown Hall Estate, near Balla, county Mayo, are compelled to go three and four miles away from their homes in search of conacre in which to sow their potatoes and a distance of seven miles for turf, while there are several hundred acres of grass lands and a sufficient quantity of turbary on the estate, which the Congested Districts Board have had in their possession since 1903, and which they refuse to give to these tenants; and, if so, will he make inquiries into this neglect on the part of the Board with a view to remedying this state of affairs.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) Some of the well-to-do tenants on the estate rent land for conacre. The Board have not refused turbary to any tenant upon the estate.

Brown Hall Estate Grazing Lands.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the Congested Districts Board purchased the Brown Hall Estate, near Balla, county Mayo, so far back as 1903, and that, so far, no attempt has been made to stripe the grazing lands with a view to handing them over to the tenants whose holdings are small and uneconomical, he will at once give orders to have the striping and fencing done on this estate.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The delay in dividing these lands has been

due to pressure of work in connection with other estates purchased by the Board, but the Board's officers are now engaged in rearranging the lands and preparing them for resale. The fencing cannot be done until this work is completed.

Establishment of a Royal Naval Reserve Battery at Ullapool.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state when it is proposed to proceed with the establishment of a Royal Naval Reserve battery at Ullapool.

(*Answered by Mr. Arthur Lee.*) It is not possible at the present moment to furnish any information on this subject beyond that contained in the Answer given to a similar Question which the hon. Member asked on April 10th † last.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Policy.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, with reference to the disposition of the ships included in the Return of Vessels struck off the Effective List, whether there has been any modification of the policy of the Admiralty since the publication of the Return.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): There has been no modification whatever in the policy of the Admiralty.

Hythe Foreshore—Government Precautions.

MR. HARDY (Kent, Ashford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can now state what action he intends to take with reference to the protection of the foreshore on the War Office land at Hythe between the Dymchurch redoubt and the musketry ranges, and especially with regard to the portion of the foreshore where the sea broke through during last winter.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 1010.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): Measures are being taken to protect the foreshore in question by means of groynes, but no final decision on the subject can be arrived at until the result of the observations which are being taken of the action of the sea is ascertained.

MR. HARDY asked if something would be done before next winter.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I take it the hon. Member thinks the foreshore is in serious danger. That is just what we are watching to ascertain.

Peat Moss Litter for Army Horses.

MR. HARDY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether general instructions have been given to generals commanding districts to substitute peat moss litter for straw for litter for the artillery and cavalry horses; whether this applies equally to districts which have within easy reach a plentiful supply of home-grown straw; and whether any economy thus obtained is not neutralised by the necessity of increasing the allowance of oats to the horses in substitution for the straw.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: Instructions have been given to General Officers Commanding to substitute peat moss litter for straw as bedding for Army horses at the principal military stations, where the supply of peat moss is more economical than that of straw, according to the respective scales of issue. The instructions given apply equally to all districts concerned; the cost involved being the determining factor as to whether peat moss litter or straw should be used for horse bedding. It is not anticipated that the economy thus obtained will be neutralised by any necessity for increasing the allowance of oats in substitution for the straw.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Is not this peat moss mainly made in Germany?

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): And Holland?

[No Answer was returned.]

The Amir's Title.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the Amir has been erroneously described as Siraj-ul-millat-wa-ud-din in a Parliamentary Paper; whether he should have been set out as Siraju-'lmillat wa'd-din; whether he is aware the name Habibulla is a contraction for Habibu Allah; and will the authorities see that this matter is at once put right to avoid further confusion.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I am informed on high authority that the transliteration of the Amir's title indicated by the hon. Member may be considered more correct, as a matter of scholarship, than that adopted by the Government of India. The same authority informs me that the transliteration of the Amir's name indicated by the hon. Member is less correct than that adopted by the Government in India. It is not proposed to take any action in the matter.

Death of a Pugilist in London Fields.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state under what circumstances a pugilist, named Lewis Wright, lost his life at London Fields on Saturday; and whether any arrests have been made in connection with the case.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Lewis Wright was stabbed, and the person who is alleged to have committed the crime is in custody.

The Gravesend Murder.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that a man concealed himself in a house in Gravesend last week, and after shooting dead one man and injuring one woman succeeded in escaping; and whether he can state what steps have been taken by the police to secure the murderer.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Yes, Sir. The murderer was found on Tuesday morning, but he committed suicide before he could be handed over to the police.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): May I ask whether, in view of the fact that Irish Members are expected to condemn crime in Ireland, English Members have done anything in that direction?

[No Answer was returned.]

Indecent Crimes in England.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the total number of cases of rape, attempted rape, indecent assault, violation of girls under thirteen years of age, defilement, desertion of children, concealment of birth, procuring or attempting to procure abortion, abduction, unnatural crime, and bestiality, reported to the police in England during the past twelve months; in how many cases did prosecutions follow; and how many convictions were obtained.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The figures for the year 1903, which are the latest available, will be found in the annual volume of the Criminal Judicial Statistics. They are too long to quote separately. The figures for 1904 are not yet complete.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: Does the right hon. Gentleman say the figures are too long to quote separately?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Yes, Sir.

Cattle Maiming in the Birmingham District.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the police authorities have received complaints as to the maiming of horses in the Birmingham district; and whether, in view of the fact that valuable horses have been found with their manes and tails cropped off, he will state what steps the constabulary authorities are taking to discover the perpetrators of these outrages.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I may refer the hon. Member to the reply which I

gave to the hon. Member for South Down yesterday.† This was that in the neighbourhood of Solihull, which is in the Birmingham district, the manes and tails of three horses were cut on the night of the 19th instant, and that a man was arrested on the following day and is now in custody on the charge of having committed these offences. I have no further information.

MR. FLYNN asked if the Government did not think special legislation necessary to deal with outrages of this kind.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I do not think it necessary.

MR. MACVEAGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in England last year there were seventy-eight cases of killing and maiming cattle? Is it not necessary to bring in a Bill to put down these atrocities?

MR. FLAVIN: Is the Constitution suspended in Birmingham and the district, or is this state of affairs the result of the fiscal campaign of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham?

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.): Do juries deal fairly with these cases in England?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I believe the administration of justice in England is sound.

Sale of Immoral Literature in London.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the open sale of immoral literature is largely on the increase in London; whether any censorship or supervision is exercised; and will this matter have the attention of the Government.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: This matter is under the constant supervision of the police, and they inform me that they believe that at no time has there ever been less trafficking in immoral literature in London than there is at present. The

† See page 326.

police, I may add, would be very glad to receive any information respecting the open sale of such literature, in order that they may be able to take proceedings.

Statistics on Suicide.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the number of suicides in London and England for the last year, distinguishing the sex and the number under twenty-one years old.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: From the Returns furnished by Coroners for insertion in the Criminal Statistics, it appears that in London, in 1904, 513 persons committed suicide, of whom 385 were males and 128 females. In the whole of England and Wales 3,421 persons, of whom 2,598 were males and 823 females, committed suicide during the same period. I regret that I have no information as to the ages of these persons.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) asked how many of the cases were certified to have been caused by poverty?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I am afraid the Returns do not show that.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne): And how many were due to drink?

[No Answer was returned.]

Prosecutions in Cases of Motor-Car Fatalities.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there will be a Treasury prosecution in the cases of the fatal accidents that occurred at Markyate and at Colnbrook.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The prosecution in the Markyate case is being conducted by the Hertfordshire police, who are employing a very competent counsel. I have consulted the Director of Public Prosecutions, and I agree with his view that nothing would be gained by taking the case out of the hands of the police. By the Colnbrook case I presume the hon. Member refers to the fatal accident

to a woman named Haines who was killed by a motor-car driven by one Hendasyde. Hendasyde has been committed for trial to the Buckinghamshire Assize on the charge of manslaughter. I have not yet had time to ascertain all the circumstances of the case, but when I have been able to do so I shall be happy to inform the hon. Member whether I think it necessary to direct the Public Prosecutor to take up the case.

Motor-Cars and Cycles.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can give any statistics of the number of motor-cars and motor-cycles at present in use in the United Kingdom, compared with the figures in the previous four years.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Motor-cars were not required to be registered until January 1st, 1904, and I am not aware of any statistics as to the number in use prior to that date. The only statistics I have on the subject are those contained in the Return moved for last year by my hon. friend the Member for the New Forest Division. This showed the number of motor-cars and motor-cycles registered up to January 1st and April 1st, 1904, respectively.

Convictions under the Motor-Car Act, 1903.

MR. TREVELYAN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can give the number of the convictions under Sections 1 and 6, respectively, of The Motor-Car Act, 1903, and the number of occasions on which the sentences have been imprisonment or a fine exceeding £10.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: With regard to the number of convictions under Section 1 of the Act, I may refer to the Answer I gave yesterday† to a Question put to me by the hon. Member for the Barnstaple Division. I have no information as to the number of convictions under Section 6.

† See page 318.

Motor-Car Accidents.

MR. CAWLEY : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the total number of motor-car accidents that have been reported this year ; and how many have been fatal accidents.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR : I am not able to state the number of motor-car accidents reported this year, but I am informed that the number reported during the last twelve months outside the Metropolitan Police District, but including the City of London, was 1,346. My information does not show how many of these cases were fatal. As regards the Metropolitan Police District I may refer the hon. Member to the table of particulars given by my right hon. friend the Home Secretary in answer to a Question by the hon. Member for the New Forest Division on April 19th † last.

Spanish Sugar Imports.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade what quantity of Spanish sugar was admitted into this country during each of the last three years.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars) : No sugar was imported into this country from Spain in 1902 or 1904. About 100 tons were received in 1903.

MR. LOUGH : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, having regard to the fact that on April 19th no countervailing duties had been fixed with respect to any additional countries, he will explain what are the reasons for issuing the Order in Council of April 3rd prohibiting the importation of sugar from Spain ; whether any representations were received from the Belgian, German, or French Governments on the subject ; and whether it was in deference to such communications the Order in Council was issued.

MR. BONAR LAW : The Order in Council prohibiting the importation of

sugar from Spain, from and after April 3rd, was issued in consequence of the importation of an appreciable quantity of Spanish sugar enjoying an indirect bounty during March. The Answer to the remainder of the Question is in the negative.

MR. LOUGH : Can the hon. Gentleman suggest any reason for this proclamation ? Was it because sugar was falling and the Government wanted to put it up again ?

MR. BONAR LAW : The Order in Council was issued in fulfilment of an obligation under which we were placed by the Convention.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) : Do I understand a decision was come to with regard to Spanish sugar ?

MR. BONAR LAW : Yes.

MR. LOUGH : At what date ?

MR. BONAR LAW : A year or two ago.

MR. LOUGH : Why was it not acted on at the time ?

MR. BONAR LAW : The hon. Gentleman is asking for information which has appeared in the papers. By the terms of the Convention we were not bound to issue the Order until an appreciable quantity of sugar had arrived.

Failsworth and Droylsden Magistracy.

MR. CAWLEY : I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster whether he is aware that in the urban district of Failsworth, with a population of over 15,000, there is no resident magistrate ; and that in the adjoining urban district of Droylsden, with a population of over 12,000, there is no resident magistrate ; and whether he will take steps to remedy a state of things in those districts which is causing great inconvenience to the inhabitants.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (SIR WILLIAM WALROND, Devonshire, Tiverton) : I have made inquiries and I find that, with the

possible exception of the chairman of the Droghda Urban District Council, no county magistrate is actually resident within the areas referred to. I have been in communication with the Lord-Lieutenant of the county and I understand that he is about to recommend to me, for appointment to the county bench, gentlemen residing in each of the urban districts in question.

MR. CAWLEY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Lord-Lieutenant has been written to by the Members for the Division, who have got no answer?

*SIR WILLIAM WALROND: I understand that is so.

Scotch Education Bill.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is now in a position to state when the Scotch Education Bill will be proceeded with.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (MR. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): I am anxious that the Bill should be proceeded with as early as possible, but I regret that in view of the state of business no further progress can be made until after Whitsuntide.

Contempt of Court in Ireland.

MR. P. A. McHUGH (Leitrim, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that in the proceedings for contempt of Court against a man named Molloy recently in Ireland, counsel for the Attorney-General appeared to argue against Molloy; and will he say whether his appearance was directed by the Attorney-General; and whether, in view of the fact that the proceedings referred to were between private persons, he will say whether there is any precedent for such intervention by the representative of the Crown.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): The Attorney-General's counsel, by the direction of the Solicitor-General, appeared for the governor of the gaol, a public official who had been served with notice, and simply argued that the

governor's action was legal. In this the Court concurred. The representative of the Crown frequently appears for public officials in cases initiated by private parties, in which those officials are sought to be made liable for their official acts.

MR. FLYNN: What counsel appeared in this case?

MR. ATKINSON: My counsel.

MR. MACVEAGH: What was his name?

MR. P. A. McHUGH: Was it not the right hon. Gentleman's son?

MR. ATKINSON: Yes, Sir.

Irish Land Act—Appointment of Public Trustee.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what were the special qualifications possessed by Mr. Arthur McClintonck that induced the Government to appoint him to the office of public trustee under the Land Act of 1903; what were his place of education, previous occupations, and experience of finance; and what are the names, place of education, salaries, and previous experience of the two persons since appointed without competitive examination in the Department.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I beg to refer to the Answer which I gave to the hon. Member's Question of Monday last.† Mr. McClintonck's previous occupations have been already stated. As to the other particulars asked for, I must request the hon. Member to await the Return which is being prepared by order of the House on his Motion.

MR. MACVEAGH: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered that part of my question as to Mr. McClintonck's special qualifications.

MR. WALTER LONG: Yes, on a previous occasion.

† See page 86.

MR. MACVEAGH: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman he has not.

MR. WALTER LONG: That is a matter of opinion.

MR. MACVEAGH: No, it is a matter of fact. You are afraid to answer it, because it is a case of jobbery from beginning to end.

Section 5 of the Land Purchase Act, 1903 —Test Case.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the test case submitted to Mr. Justice Meredith by the Estates Commissioners on the true construction of Section 5 of the Land Purchase Act of 1903 has been heard in the absence of the tenant purchaser; and whether no notice of the hearing was served upon him, although Mr. Justice Meredith directed that it should be done.

MR. WALTER LONG: The case referred to is still *sub judice*, and, following the invariable practice, I must decline to discuss it through the medium of a Question.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It has been argued in the absence of the tenant.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have nothing to do with that. It is a matter for the Judge, and I have no right to discuss his action.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: At any rate, that is what has taken place.

Police Searches for Arms on the De Freyne Estate.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Roscommon, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether District Superintendent Supple and a number of police visited several houses on the De Freyne Estate on Friday last and searched them for arms; if so, at whose application did the Lord-Lieutenant issue his warrant for this search, and on what grounds was the search deemed desirable; and what is the last occasion on which firearms were used in a distur-

bance or in connection with an outrage in this district.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Answer to the first inquiry is in the affirmative. The warrants were issued on the application of the police authorities. I must decline to state the grounds on which the search was deemed necessary. The last occasion on which firearms were used in connection with outrage in this locality was in 1877.

MR. DILLON: I beg respectfully to ask will the right hon. Gentleman give some reasons why these irritating searches are made when no outrage has been committed for nearly thirty years?

MR. WALTER LONG: I must respectfully decline to give reasons.

MR. DILLON: Then at the earliest opportunity I shall bring up the question of the different treatment meted out to the North of Ireland.

MR. ROCHE (Galway, E.): Is it not the fact that the searches are made simply for the purpose of preserving the game on Lord de Freyne's estate.

[No Answer was returned.]

Gore Booth Estate, County Sligo.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say when the arrangements for the sale to tenants of the Gore Booth Estate, situate in Lavagh, near Tubbercurry, county Sligo, will receive the sanction of the Estates Commissioners; whether he is aware that the only evicted tenant on the estate, John Quinn, has entered into an arrangement with the present occupier of his farm, Edward Layng, and that the latter agrees to surrender the farm on being paid a cash compensation; and whether, seeing that this agreement has been duly signed by both parties, and that all classes in the district are anxious for an amicable settlement of this question, steps will be taken to have it finally settled and the tenant reinstated.

MR. WALTER LONG: A detailed inspection of the holdings has yet to be

made before advances can be sanctioned. As to the remainder of the Question, I beg to refer to the Answer which I gave to the hon. Member's Question of April 17th†.

The Carrowkeel Proclaimed Meeting.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the attention of the Lord Chancellor has been called to the conduct of Mr. Higgins, J.P., in attending at and refusing to desist from taking part in a proclaimed meeting at Carrowkeel; and whether he can say if the Lord Chancellor intends to deprive Mr. Higgins of his commission of the peace.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have referred this Question to the Lord Chancellor. Mr. Higgins has not been prosecuted for or convicted of any offence in connection with this occurrence; and the Lord Chancellor informs me that he has no machinery to institute an inquiry in the matter, nor would it be in accordance with the practice of his Department to attempt to do so.

Trespass Action at Gurteen Petty Sessions.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at Gurteen Petty Sessions on 5th May, when a summons for trespass was being heard against Patrick Costelloe on account of his cattle having strayed on to another man's land from his farm, on which a great part of the walls had been maliciously thrown down, one of the magistrates told him in open Court that his proper course was to give up the farm; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. WALTER LONG: As far as I have been able to ascertain, the remark mentioned, if made, did not come from any member of the bench, but from some person in Court.

Eviction Notices in Ireland.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of

Ireland whether he is aware that 432 eviction notices under Section 7 of the Land Act of 1887 have been filed during the quarter ending March 31st, 1905; and, if so, whether, in view of the declared intention of Parliament by the Land Purchase Act of 1903 to facilitate the system of occupying ownership in Ireland, he will consider the propriety of introducing legislation to repeal this section, under which a number of occupying tenants are deprived of their *status* under the Land Acts.

MR. WALTER LONG: It is not proposed to introduce legislation of the character suggested.

MR. FLYNN: Is it the intention of the Government to allow this alarming state of things to continue? Will the right hon. Gentleman not promise legislation early next session in order to do away with these anomalies?

MR. WALTER LONG: I think I had better make no promise of legislation for next session.

Sacrilege in Ireland.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many cases of sacrilege have been reported to the police in Ireland for the year ending April 19th, 1905, giving the numbers for each of the four provinces.

MR. WALTER LONG: Nine; namely, five in Ulster, three in Leinster, and one in Connaught. There was no case in Munster.

The Anderson Case.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the medical certificates of chastity in the Anderson case were dealt with by the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary and retained in his office; and, if so, why these documents in the chain of evidence were not forwarded to the Under-Secretary, by whom the order for dismissal was signed.

MR. WALTER LONG: My hon. friend is under a misapprehension. The

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 313.

recommendation to dismiss was made by the Inspector-General on November 30th, 1903, and approved by the Under-Secretary on December 3rd; and orders on it were issued on December 4th. The medical certificate was not received by the Inspector-General until January 3rd, and it was forwarded to the Under-Secretary on January 22nd, who approved of the letter, dated January 23rd, which the Inspector-General addressed to Anderson's solicitor, declining to reopen the case.

MR. DILLON: Is it not the fact that after the medical certificates had been submitted, the Inspector-General wrote absolutely declining to reopen the case?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have said so.

MR. FLAVIN: Is there any medical certificate to show that the constable did not attempt a criminal assault on this woman?

[No Answer was returned.]

Boycotting in County Tyrone.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that a man named William Coote has paid damages in settlement of an action for boycotting in county Tyrone, he can now state if Coote is to be retained in the commission of the peace; and whether it is intended to prosecute him for boycotting and inciting to boycott.

MR. WALTER LONG: As I have already stated in answer to a previous Question upon the same subject, Mr. Coote paid no damages in settlement of the action referred to. He did, before trial, and by way of settlement, agree to make a contribution towards the costs of plaintiff in the action, but on the understanding that all further litigation on the subject was to cease. Subsequently, a second action was instituted in reference to the same matter, and, as an appeal is now actually pending from the decision in the second action, I must decline—until the appeal is determined—to make any further statement in the matter.

MR. DILLON: Is the right hon. Gentleman sure the second action does not refer to a totally different matter?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It is a different plaintiff.

MR. DILLON: I think the right hon. Gentleman will find he is mistaken.

MR. WALTER LONG: I will inquire again.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Will the magistrate be suspended meanwhile?

MR. WALTER LONG: No; that would prejudice the case.

Lord Ardilaun's Estate.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a number of the agricultural tenants of Lord Ardilaun, at Killarney, have been prevented by the landlord from purchasing their holdings, though the largest portion of the estate (which was at the time owned by the late Mr. Herbert, of Muckross) was sold to the tenants; and if the Estates Commissioners have received any communications from Lord Ardilaun or his representatives as to a sale of the unsold portion.

MR. WALTER LONG: This estate has not come before the Commissioners. They have received no communication from Lord Ardilaun on the subject, and have no knowledge of the statements made in the Question.

MR. MURPHY: I am personally aware of the facts. Can the right hon. Gentleman do nothing to compel Lord Ardilaun to sell?

MR. WALTER LONG: As the estate is not before the Commissioners, obviously the Executive Government cannot compel a landlord to deal with his property if he does not choose to do so.

MR. MURPHY: His deer are eating the tenants' crops and he will neither sell nor give them protection.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Why not shoot the deer and eat them?

MR. ROCHE: I will go down there.

Major Boyle's Sligo Estate.

MR. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether the untenanted portion of the estate of Major Boyle, situate at Oldrock, near Ballymote, county Sligo, has been sold within the past two years to a non-residential grazier; if so, will he give the name of the purchaser, and say whether any public money has been advanced for the purpose of perfecting the purchase.

MR. WALTER LONG: No such sale can be traced.

The O'Connor Estate, County Mayo.

MR. O'DOWD: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the agreement for the purchase of the O'Connor Estate, situate in Floughena, near Ballaghaderreen, county Mayo, which was mutually agreed to by landlord and tenants alike, has yet received the sanction of the Estates Commissioners; and, if so, will he say what arrangement, if any, has been made for the reinstating of the orphans of the late Thomas Durkan, the only evicted tenant on the estate.

MR. WALTER LONG: I beg to refer to the Answer which I gave yesterday † to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for East Mayo.

Irish Local Government Account Books.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state in whose name the account books devised after the passing of the Local Government Act are registered or copyrighted; in whose name the account books required by the Public Bodies Order, 1904, are registered or copyrighted; whether any profits have accrued, or will accrue, in either case to any official of the Local Government Board; and when the copyright in the first set of account books expired.

† See page 337.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have already informed the hon. Member that the prescribed forms of account have not been copyrighted. If any forms have been copyrighted by a member of the Local Government Board's staff, the Board have no cognisance of the fact. Such forms are not the prescribed forms, and there is no obligation on local bodies to use them.

MR. MACVEAGH: Why were the copyrighting facilities given to Dr. Ellis refused to the clerk to the county council?

MR. WALTER LONG said he knew nothing as to that.

MR. MACVEAGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman give me a straight answer—has he asked Dr. Ellis if he is deriving any royalties privately from the sale of these books?

MR. WALTER LONG: In view of the Answer I have given it was not necessary to put such a Question to him.

MR. MACVEAGH: The whole transaction is a public fraud.

Crime in Ireland.

MR. ROCHE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that, in the Parliamentary Return, circulated last week, on all outrages and other offences of an indictable character in Ireland, there were committed in Ulster 33 per cent. of the offences against the person, 38 per cent. of the offences against property, 35 per cent. of the offences against the public peace, omitting alleged threatening letters, and 45 per cent. of all other offences; whether he is aware that, of the indictable offences in Ulster, 42 per cent. were committed in Belfast; and whether, if these figures be correct, he will state what special steps will be taken to more strictly enforce law and order in the province of Ulster.

MR. WALTER LONG: The facts are correctly stated in the Question, save that as regards offences against the

public peace, omitting threatening letters and notices, only 23 per cent. occurred in Ulster. The Parliamentary Return referred to does not include the Dublin Metropolitan Police district. At the last census the population of Ireland (excluding Dublin) was 4,076,304. The population of Ulster was 1,582,826, or 38·8 per cent. The percentage of outrages in Ulster is less than this in three out of the four classes alluded to in the Question. Taking the four classes *in globo*, only 32 per cent. occurred in Ulster. As I have already pointed out, the figures indicate that no special steps are necessary for the enforcement of law and order in Ulster.

MR. FLAVIN: Will the right hon. Gentleman be good enough to give any Member of the Irish Party half-a-dozen specific cases of so-called outrage on private property, so that we may test the accuracy of the police report?

[No Answer was returned.]

Untenanted Land in Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how many acres of untenanted land in the county of Limerick have been purchased by the Estates Commissioners and the names of the estates in which it is situated.

MR. WALTER LONG: No untenanted lands have yet been purchased, but the Commissioners are negotiating for the purchase of 1,638 acres.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Where?

MR. WALTER LONG: I cannot say without further inquiry.

Limerick Evicted Tenants.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of tenants who have bought, or agreed to buy, their holdings in the Western Parliamentary Division of the county of Limerick; the number of applications made by evicted tenants for reinstatement in their holdings there; how many of these have been reinstated

since November 1st, 1903, by the landlords; and how many of them have been reinstated by the Estates Commissioners, or given equivalent holdings, since the same date, and the names of such tenants in both cases.

MR. WALTER LONG: The records of the Commissioners are not kept by Parliamentary Divisions. Agreements for purchase have been received from 1,565 tenants in county Limerick. Two hundred and sixty-four applications of evicted tenants for reinstatement have been received, and of these four have been reinstated by the landlords, but none by the Commissioners. Three other tenants, who had not made application to the Commissioners, have been reinstated by the landlord. I will procure and forward to the hon. Member the names of the tenants reinstated.

Irish Schools.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say why it is that, under Rule 194 of the Commissioners' Code, building grants for adjoining boys' and girls' schools cannot be made unless there is an average attendance of fifty pupils in each school, while, under revised Rule 186, amalgamation of boys' and girls' schools shall not take place where, in the opinion of the Commissioners, the average attendance would be over thirty, but for the operation of Rule 127 (b).

MR. WALTER LONG: The Commissioners do not make building grants for new separate schools for boys and girls unless there will be an average attendance sufficient for the employment of a second teacher at each school. They continue, however, to make grants to existing separate schools for boys and girls with averages between thirty and fifty, and they have so far relaxed their requirements that they do not insist upon amalgamation unless the average at either school falls below thirty.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY asked why the alteration had been made in the figures of the average attendance.

MR. WALTER LONG: I ought to have notice of that.

Mrs. Hester Nevins' Limerick Estate.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the sale of the estate of Mrs. Hester Nevins, of Mountshannon, in the county of Limerick, to the Estates Commissioners has yet been completed; if so, what is the area of the same and the purchase price; how much untenanted land is on the estate; how is it worked at present; whether it is yet divided into allotments for the evicted tenants; if so, have the Commissioners decided to whom to give them; what is the area of those allotments; and when will the evicted tenants be put into occupation of them.

MR. WALTER LONG: The sale of this estate, which comprises 367 acres of untenanted land, has not yet been completed. Pending completion of the sale, I am unable to give the other information desired.

Irish Land Purchase Regulations.

MR. GORDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in framing the new regulations for the Estates Commissioners, care will be taken to provide that the funds available from time to time under the Land Act, 1903, shall be applied to carrying out purchases in the order of priority of such purchases, and without giving any preference to any purchaser or class of purchasers.

MR. WALTER LONG: The matter has been considered, and the regulations I intend to publish will deal with it.

MR. GORDON: But will priority be given to sales to the Land Commission or Congested Districts Board over sales between landlord and tenant?

MR. WALTER LONG: I think it would be more convenient to await the publication of the rules, but it seems to me priority should, generally speaking, be given according to date of application.

MR. LOUGH asked if a fresh loan was to be issued under the Bill.

MR. WALTER LONG said he was not in a position to answer that Question.

Mr. Lauder's King's County Estate.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say if the Estates Commissioners have purchased the property of Mr. Lauder, at Clonfanlough, Ballinahoun, King's County; whether there is any untenanted land or grass land let on the eleven months system on this estate; and, if so, do the Estates Commissioners intend to allocate these lands amongst the small holders so as to make the uneconomic holdings on this estate into economic holdings.

MR. WALTER LONG: The estate has been inspected and reported on, but further inquiries are necessary. There are 581 acres of untenanted land on the property, with the distribution of which the Commissioners will deal in the event of their acquiring the estate.

Trinity College Commission Report.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say when the Report of the Trinity College Commission will be circulated as a Parliamentary Paper.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Report will be circulated to-day.

Mallow Postal Service.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed at a meeting of the Mallow Rural District Council and Board of Guardians, drawing attention to the inadequate postal service between Buttevant and Liscarroll and Churchtown; and, if so, whether he will now arrange for a mail car service to meet the increasing needs of the district.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): As I explained to the hon. Member by letter a few months ago, the improvement desired in the post to Churchtown and Liscarroll could not be carried out without causing serious hardship to the

postman who now conveys the mails from Buttevant, and I do not think the improvement is so urgently required as to warrant such a step.

MR. FLYNN: Do the postal authorities intend, in order to preserve a private vested interest, to inflict great inconvenience and loss on the public?

LORD STANLEY: If the hon. Member likes to put it in that way—yes.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. BELL (Derby): I beg to ask the Home Secretary whether a day can be given for the Workmen's Compensation Bill before the adjournment for the Whitsuntide holidays.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Can the right hon. Gentleman make a general statement regarding the course of business?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: On Monday next it is proposed first to take the Third Reading of the Finance Bill. There are two formal stages of money Resolutions. I believe the Secretary for the Treasury has already informed the House that another Consolidated Fund Bill is necessary; and it is proposed, therefore, to set up Committee in Ways and Means as the second order, then to take the Loans Bill and Report of Vote 10 for the Navy. On Tuesday the Speaker proposes to announce to the House his intention of retiring from the Chair. After that, Supply, the Board of Trade Vote, will be taken. On Wednesday the Scottish Churches Bill will be introduced under the ten minutes rule, and it is proposed to take the Motion for the holiday adjournment. On Thursday there will be the election of the new Speaker.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: When will the vote of thanks to Mr. Speaker be moved?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The vote of thanks to the Speaker will be taken on Wednesday, according to precedent. In reply to the hon. Member for Derby, I may say I am anxious to get the Workmen's Compensation Bill before the

Grand Committee on Trade. If I am fortunate enough to get the evening sitting on Monday, I shall be prepared to put the Bill on the Paper. I trust the House will send it to the Grand Committee on Trade that evening.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): What about the Whitsuntide holidays?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The House will adjourn on Thursday next until Tuesday, the 20th. On Thursday there will be practically no business. The Speaker adjourns the House at once, and business cannot be taken until his election has been approved.

The Unemployed Bill.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is yet in a position to fix a date for taking the Second Reading of the Unemployed Bill.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I hope that it will be possible to take the Second Reading of this Bill on the first day on which the House meets again after the Whitsuntide recess (Tuesday, June 20th).

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Is that day, then, definitely fixed on?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: Yes, Sir.

Objectionable Street Literature.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Home Secretary if his attention has been drawn to the fact that hawkers are hawking in the streets of London leaflets and cards deeply bordered in black and containing matter most offensive to Russians in our midst. Have the police any authority in the matter, and can action be taken to stop this gross breach of courtesy.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I had not heard of the matter until my hon. friend called my attention to it five minutes ago. Evidently it is an extremely regrettable matter, and I will see if any action can be taken.

The Vote of Censure.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: What day can the right hon. Gentleman

give us for the Motion of my right hon. friend the Member for Berwick?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I understood last night that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick had taken this notice off the Paper. I had hoped my right hon. friend the First Lord of the Treasury would be in his place to-day. I am afraid, however, that I must ask that the Question may be deferred. I hope my right hon. friend will be here on Monday.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There will be a day given.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I cannot go further than I went yesterday. If the right hon. Gentleman took the Question off the Paper, he can make an application. [Cries of "No, no!"] I gave no definite promise that a day would be given. I said it must be at the discretion of the Prime Minister.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understood that arrangements were made in the usual way last night—that a day would be given, it being left to the Government to fix a day, subject to the convenience of the House.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I had not heard of that, but my right hon. friend the Member for the Wellington Division of Somerset has just told me he distinctly stated he must see the Motion. My right hon. friend has just whispered in my ear that some negotiation took place last night, but I understand him practically to confirm what I said, that any Motion of that sort would be handed to the Prime Minister, and he would give an Answer on his return to the House.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This Motion has been taken off for the convenience of the Government. It was part of the arrangement made. The hon. Member for Peebles-shire shakes his head. What part had he in the transaction? Was he present when the arrangements were made?

SIR WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): No, no!

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think the hon. Member had better keep his head steady. I distinctly understood my right hon. friend to remove the notice from the Paper with a view to reviving it and replacing it on the Paper after Whitsuntide, for a day which would be appointed after communication with the Government.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington): I suggested that the Motion should be taken off the Paper and that when the Prime Minister came back to the House he should be asked a Question as to whether he would give a day for it after Whitsuntide. I fully expected at the time that the Prime Minister would be in his place to-day and able to answer the Question.

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE (Leeds, W.): I must remind my right hon. friend that I asked him particularly whether I was to understand that it was a case of Monday next or no day at all. He said he must take counsel on that point. He came back to me and said that if my right hon. friend the Member for Berwick would withdraw his Motion, and if my right hon. friend would put a Question to the Prime Minister to-day, an announcement would be made with regard to a day after Whitsuntide. It was an absolute condition of the withdrawal of the Motion that a day after Whitsuntide should be given.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD: I do not want my words to be misconstrued. I did not desire to force hon. Gentlemen to act against their wishes, and I thought that in the circumstances the best course was to take the Motion off the Paper and put a Question to the Prime Minister as to when a day could be given.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If the question of a further consultation is to turn upon when a day is to be given we are quite content, but we do not wish it to turn on the question whether a day is to be given, and what the Home Secretary said rather tended in that direction.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Am I right in concluding that there is no intention on the part of the Government to refuse a day?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: There is no such intention. I was not aware this arrangement had taken place between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds and my right hon. friend. I cannot answer for the Prime Minister, but I have no doubt about the matter.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am sorry to be pertinacious; it is necessary. I really do not see why the right hon. Gentleman should not have been fortified with sufficient authority from the Prime Minister to give an Answer which would have been satisfactory to us. If he is not able to answer so simple a Question without referring to the Prime Minister it is placing him in a rather undignified position.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I regret if that is so. I thought the Prime Minister would be here to-day. I did not know this compact had taken place. I cannot pledge myself, in the Prime Minister's absence, to a definite statement on that point. I will undertake to do so on Monday if the Prime Minister is not here.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We shall assume that a day will be given.

SUPPLY [9th ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £146,954, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on March 31st, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board."

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said he regretted to have to move the reduction in this form because the right hon. Gentleman had had nothing to do with the grievance of which he complained. The Motor-Car Act of 1903 was the result of a distinct compromise, and the point upon which that compromise turned was the question of speed, and of the local authorities having the power to regulate the speed in their own districts. At the time the Bill was under discussion many Members acknowledged and adopted the view of the then President of the Local Government Board that there should be no speed limit, but that motorists should be allowed to travel on long straight roads at any speed they chose at their own risk, but at dangerous crossings and when they came to towns and villages the local authorities should have power to enforce a speed limit and to control the traffic in their particular district, subject, of course, to the decision of the Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman gave the House that deliberate pledge, and upon that compromise the Bill passed into law.

What they complained of was not the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had been an unjust judge, but that he had been such a judge as this country had never seen before. He prevented the case coming to trial. The very first thing he did when he got rid of the House was to circularise the local authorities to the effect that in Mr. Walter Long's general view it was not desirable to enforce this part of the Act until it was seen how the other provisions worked. There were no other provisions of any importance; Section 1 of the Motor Act really expressed the common law of England, and Section 2 gave the local authorities the power they always had to mark dangerous places. That was the way in which the right hon. Gentleman carried out the law which he was called upon to administer, and upon his shoulders rested the responsibility for the whole evil that had arisen in this country on this matter. He did not need to discuss any Amendment of the Act; the Act was not unfair, and, fairly administered, it would work as well as any other. He would

have been perfectly satisfied to have had no speed limit so long as the local authorities had had some control in the matter. The noble Lord the Member for Chorley, the First Commissioner of Works, had limited the speed in the Royal Parks to ten miles an hour, although the rule was constantly being broken, but if the Corporation of the City of London or the local authority for Greater London wanted to stop cars going down the London roads at twenty miles an hour they had to go to the Local Government Board.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.), who had at this moment entered the House, said: The hon. Gentleman must pardon me; he has made a statement that I gave the House a definite pledge. May I ask him to produce that pledge?

*MR. CATHCART WASON: I will produce it. You told me in your own room. I instanced my own county of Shetland, where no one would dream of driving beyond a speed of ten miles an hour. Your remark to me, as far as I recollect, was that it was intolerable that in a great county like Yorkshire the speed should be reduced over the whole area.

MR. WALTER LONG: The hon. Gentleman stated explicitly that I gave a pledge. I have asked him to produce the pledge, and he now proceeds to give his own recollection.

*MR. CATHCART WASON: I say I am the pledge. The matter is absolutely within the common knowledge of the House.

MR. WALTER LONG: How can it be within the common knowledge of the House when the hon. Gentleman has stated that what he refers to took place in my private room?

*MR. CATHCART WASON: The right hon. Gentleman has never denied what I say.

MR. WALTER LONG: I deny it now.

*MR. CATHCART WASON said that the deliberate pledge was by putting words in the Bill in another place that the

Mr. Cathcart Wason.

local authorities should have control of the speed limit in their own districts, and that the discretion of the Local Government Board should not be unreasonably and unfairly exercised. That discretion had been unreasonably and unfairly exercised by the right hon. Gentleman.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) thought the hon. Gentleman had not read the circular accurately.

*MR. CATHCART WASON said he believed he had quoted the circular accurately. They thought they could trust the right hon. Gentleman in this matter, and they had been very bitterly deceived. The issue of the circular was a grossly impertinent action on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. [Cries of "Order" and "Withdraw."]

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I think that is quite un-Parliamentary language.

*MR. CATHCART WASON said he desired to withdraw the expression, and said at all events it was an exercise of administration which no one expected from the right hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member then referred to the evidence given by the chairman of the Lancashire County Council (Sir John Hibbert) before the Royal Commission, to the effect that Lancashire had been compelled to spend £12,000 on their roads owing to the damage done by motor traffic. The President of the Local Government Board did not know anything of this scandal. As a result of the right hon. Gentleman's action, heavy motors weighing up to twelve tons were now to be allowed to travel at twelve miles an hour despite all the evidence before the Committee from country districts.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that the local authorities could limit the weight of the vehicles passing over the bridges.

*MR. CATHCART WASON said that that did not exonerate the right hon. Gentleman's Department from having given motors weighing twelve tons the

right to travel at twelve miles an hour. He had no feeling as regarded the motorists themselves or the motor industry; he was only desirous to see that the public rights were safeguarded. It was, in his opinion, a very undesirable thing that the police should be denounced as spies and informers, and for setting traps for motorists, and he now hoped they would hear better things. He thought the law ought to be most strictly carried out, and that no privilege ought to be created in favour of that very small class whose only desire seemed to be to over-reach their neighbours.

MR. WALTER LONG said he regretted that so good a cause had found such a poor advocacy as the speech they had just heard. He shared the view that the users and drivers of motor-cars abused their privileges and had given the public good cause for complaint. It would have been quite possible for the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland to have made out a good case without accusing the late President of the Local Government Board of breaking his pledges. The hon. Member had accused him of having broken a pledge which he gave to the House and when challenged on the point he fell back upon an interview which took place between the hon. Member and himself in his private room in the House. He agreed that such an interview took place, but he denied emphatically and categorically the hon. Member's recollection of what took place upon that occasion. The hon. Member alleged that he promised him that discretion should rest in regard to these regulations with the local authorities. As the House was aware, the Bill was originally introduced without any speed limit and it was suggested in the House that a speed limit should be inserted. The hon. Member suggested that local authorities should have the right to make representations to the central authority. That right he conceded, and he had never denied it either in private interviews or in any of his speeches, but he had never for one instant surrendered the position he had always taken up, namely, that the final decision and discretion in this matter must rest with the central authority. Where was the breach of faith? What did the hon.

Member mean by accusing him of a breach of faith?

After being driven from this charge the hon. Member fell back upon the circular, which he had described as "an impertinent interference with the local authorities." He regretted that the hon. Member did not take the precaution to bring the circular with him. The words of the circular were "and the Board are accordingly disposed." It went on to point out the view he had held throughout, namely, that the best protection to the public was to be found in the full exercise of the powers conferred by Section 1 of the Act, because the imposition of a speed limit carried with it dangers to the public, because the police, the public, and the careless drivers were apt to look at the statutory requirement in regard to speed rather than to the public safety. He maintained when the Act was before the House, and he maintained now, that there was no speed limit which could be imposed upon either a motor-car or a dog-cart which would under all circumstances be safe. He saw the other day a motor-car which was not going more than eight miles an hour, but even that was a great deal faster than it ought to have gone under the circumstances. The moment they laid down a statutory provision that the speed should be a certain number of miles per hour they at once ran the great risk that the police and the public would give undue attention to the restriction and not give sufficient attention to the general protection of the lives of the public. From the very beginning he had held that view with all the energy he was able to command, and that view dominated all his action in regard to the Motor-Car Act. Therefore it was a gross misrepresentation of the history of these proceedings to allege that he had given any pledge in any form whatever either in private or in public which departed in the smallest degree from the views he had laid down in the House. He denied that there were any words in the Act capable of that construction. If the circular was illegal then his action was also illegal, and the hon. Member had the usual remedy in a Court of law, and he ought not to waste the time of the House

discussing such a question. The paragraph in the circular which the hon. Member had described as impertinent simply stated that the Board were accordingly disposed to recommend the local authorities to refrain from proposing any extensive resort to certain powers conferred upon them by the Act until it was seen that the other provisions of the statute rendered such a resort indispensable. He appealed to the Committee to say whether it was possible for anybody to frame any less impertinent and less offensive words to be addressed to the local authorities than those. Until they had had some experience of the working of the Act the local authorities were simply asked to abstain from the imposition of restrictions which he believed would tend more to the danger than to the safety of the public.

He did not propose to deal with the general question, which would be much better dealt with by his successor in office, but he did feel that it was impossible to allow the extraordinary charge which had been made against him to go unanswered. He could hardly regard a charge that he had been guilty of breaking a Parliamentary pledge as seriously made, but it was a serious charge, and indeed it was a charge which ought to be met as soon as it was made. The hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland had produced no evidence in support of his charge, and he regretted that so good a case had found so bad an advocate.

*MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) congratulated the right hon. Gentleman upon the very healthy doctrine he had laid down in regard to pledges. He had not the same hesitation as his hon. friend in regard to moving a Motion to reduce the salary of the President of the Local Government Board, in fact there were none of His Majesty's Ministers whose salary he would not like to reduce; therefore he would move to reduce the salary of the right hon. Gentleman by £100. He wished to thank hon. Gentlemen opposite, and more particularly those who represented motorists, for assisting them to get an

opportunity for bringing on this debate, they had shown no desire to burke discussion and they had fully recognised with them that as this matter was one which affected the weal and welfare of so many of His Majesty's subjects, it ought to be discussed on the floor of the House of Commons. He would endeavour to reciprocate that spirit and he would not say anything to endeavour to arouse prejudice. He had, therefore, no intention of alluding to motorists as "road hogs," "motor fiends," "goggled villains," or any similar epithets which had been bandied about from time to time. On the other hand the courtesy must be reciprocated, and he did not expect to be alluded to as a modern Mrs. Partington inimical to the cause of progress and progressive influences. They were dealing with a matter of very great importance which was agitating the minds of millions of people who used the public roads of this country, and therefore he thought they ought to discuss the matter in a calm and temperate spirit.

They had been met with the familiar argument. "Motorists have come to stay," and the people who used that statement treated it as the Alpha and Omega of the question, the beginning and ending of the argument, but on his part he agreed with that argument in so far as they supplied a practical and well-known want. It seemed to him, however, that the statutory privileges conferred on motorists should always be regulated by the well-known rule that everyone must use what belonged to him in such a way as not to hurt what belonged to other people. To show that he was not bigoted he might say that he was glad to see from the papers that a company intended to run a number of motor hansom cabs in the City of London. Most horse-lovers recognised that the lives of many horses in this country were little short of tragedies, well-groomed, well-fed, well-housed, well-cared for in the days of their youth, in their old age they were often sold for an old song and the last ounce of strength and life was thrashed out of them in the streets of London. Many of them would be glad to see an absolute end to

Mr. Walter Long.

that sort of thing. He also recognised the fact that motors were of considerable advantage to professional men in the country districts. For instance the most popular veterinary surgeon in North Devon used a motor. There were also in Barnstaple many doctors who availed themselves of motor-cars, and that meant that they were able to extend the area of their operations, and so relieve a much larger amount of suffering than would otherwise be the case. But this was a matter to be observed that though there was a considerable amount of strong feeling in his constituency against a certain class of motorists, there was practically no feeling at all against those local motorists to whom he alluded. That was because these gentlemen knew every turn in the high roads, knew exactly where one road was bisected by another, and knew how to act when they met a herd of cattle, a restive horse, or a flock of sheep. The fact of the matter was that they were always courteous and considerate in regard to vehicular traffic, and they recognised that though they were made for the road, the road was not made for them. Having made these admissions, he hoped he should not be looked upon as a wild and irrational opponent of motor-cars.

He wanted to discuss the carrying out of the Act of 1903. When that Act was introduced he moved the rejection of it mainly on two grounds—firstly, because there was no speed limit proposed; and secondly, because the President of the Local Government Board refused to allow county councils to manage the areas within their jurisdiction. The right hon. Gentleman gave way on the first point, but not on the second. He thought then that the right hon. Gentleman was wrong in refusing to give way on that point, and experience had now proved that to be the case. What had been the result of that Act in Devonshire, in which he lived? Their position had been worsened instead of being bettered by the Act. It had been a curse to them instead of a blessing. Nine out of every ten of the touring motors which came into Devonshire paid no attention whatever to the speed limit. It might

be asked: "Why do not you prosecute them?" Well, there was a clause in the Act which said that two witnesses were wanted in regard to the speed limit, and that would mean that the staff of policemen would have to be largely increased. That would involve a very heavy burden on the ratepayers. Then, too, in North Devon there were no scheduled areas at all, and the consequence was that motorists were allowed to go twenty miles an hour wherever they liked. They might be asked why they did not schedule the roads. That was a very expensive matter. It meant the putting up of notice boards, and if they were to do their duty to the motorists it meant the lighting of them at night. That would throw a considerable burden on the rates of the district. The rates were already very heavy. They had been largely increased by the education rate alone. He did not think it was right to ask the agricultural community to incur a heavy burden in order to protect themselves against dangers arising out of the amusements of wealthy men. The result was that at the Easter holiday time—and he had no doubt it would be the same at the Whitsuntide recess—some of the country roads in Devonshire were just as if hell were let loose on them. People were smothered in dust, ladies dare not drive along the road, and children who lived in cottages by the roadside had to be absolutely confined at home all day. If there was one thing more serious than another it was the question of the children. These country districts were the breeding ground of the nation, and all wished to see happy, healthy, and rosy-cheeked children in the country. Country cottages were not big enough for a lot of children to stay indoors all day long, and anything that affected the health of these children should be looked upon as a grave matter indeed.

It was quite true that country people were displaying inimitable patience with this. He wondered at the patience of poor people in regard to this and other questions. Let not the right hon. Gentleman think that, because there had been no uproar, there was no great feeling on the matter. They felt the injustice of it,

although they did not know the remedy. Last Easter he spoke to a water bailiff near one of the main roads along which a large number of cars passed. When asked what he thought of the matter he replied—

"I don't mind them so much, but the worst is we have to keep the children indoors all day."

That was the whole conversation. The old man did not grumble but he would confess that it angered him to think that on that beautiful spring day the children had to be kept indoors all day in order that wealthy people might enjoy the amusement of rushing along the roads at a furious pace! He asked the Committee to notice what the President of the Local Government Board—the present Chief Secretary for Ireland—said when he was introducing the Bill which was now the Act under which the whole thing was being carried on. He said—

"It is not only the security of life and limb that has to be dealt with, but also the extraordinary discomfort suffered by people who live on the roads which motors largely frequent. Many houses alongside the public roads have been rendered almost uninhabitable, not only by the dust, which is an intolerable nuisance in the summer months, but by other inconveniences which follow from the improper use of this means of conveyance. It is in order to deal with these difficulties that the Government have thought it their duty to introduce the Bill to Parliament."

He would ask—Had not the expectations of the right hon. Gentleman proved absolutely fallacious? Was not the prophecy which was made on that occasion as false as a pamphlet of the Tariff Reform League? He did not think that any fair-minded man could deny that that was the case. One of the main features with regard to the Act of 1903 was that it was a temporary and tentative Act. Why was it temporary and tentative? It was because it was felt that too great power ought not to be entrusted to local magistrates. Many of them were known to have strong prejudices against motor-cars. It was felt that if too drastic power was given to them the result might be the entire stoppage of the motor industry. After eighteen months experience of the Act there were very few cases which could be pointed out in which the magistrates had behaved partially with regard to motorists. There were a few, but it

should be remembered that they heard about every one of these cases. Motorists were powerful in the Press; they could all write letters, and therefore, whenever there was a case of injustice it was sure to be thoroughly well ventilated in the papers. On the whole, the magistrates had exercised the powers conferred upon them wisely, judicially, and well. Therefore the Committee might come to the conclusion that it would be perfectly safe, if it was thought necessary, to entrust the magistrates with wider powers than they possessed at the present time.

Another reason why the Act was temporary and tentative was that it was not known how motorists were going to behave. Some had one view, and others had another view, as to their probable conduct. He was sorry to say, and he thought the Committee would agree with him, that, taken as a whole, the motorists had not come well out of the trial. He admitted that the hon. Member for the New Forest Division had done his best in the matter; he had issued rules and regulations from time to time, but they had been disobeyed. The fact was that the touring motorist thought he could do just as he liked so long as he paid the fine. A fine of £5 was nothing whatever to a man who could ride in a £1,000 motor-car. In answer to a Question which he put to the President of the Local Government Board yesterday the right hon. Gentleman told him that in England and Wales outside the Metropolitan Police district there had been 837 convictions under Section 1 (1) of the Motor-Car Act, 1903, during the last twelve months. These were convictions for reckless driving to the danger of the public. The right hon. Gentleman further stated that in regard to the Metropolitan district during 1904 there were 168 convictions under the sub-section. Did not this prove that fines were no preventive? Was it not a known fact that at the present moment many motor papers published lists of "Police Traps," and told their readers that there were certain places where the law could be broken with impunity and certain places where it could not. Motorists did not think the imposition of a fine was a proof of bad citizenship. They paid their money, considered it was a piece of bad luck, and then thought no more

about it. There was no moral sanction behind these fines so far as motorists were concerned. He thought, therefore, that time had proved three things. The first was that taking motorists as a class they could not be relied on to act in a proper and gentlemanly manner in motoring along the road. Then it had been shown that fines had not had a sufficient deterrent effect. It had also been shown that it would be safe to entrust the magistrates with more drastic powers than they at present possessed. He would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that power should be given to imprison anyone for the first offence on conviction of driving recklessly to the danger of the public. He would suggest also that power should be given to the county councils to manage the areas under their jurisdiction. They made the roads; why should they not manage the traffic upon them? If they were competent to manage the education of children, surely they were competent to manage the motor traffic.

There were many other questions in connection with this matter. There was the great question of dust. He believed that that was exciting the attention of the motorists as well as of the general public, and he would like to hear what they had to say about it in the course of the debate. Then there was the question as to whether the motors were sufficiently distinguished by their marks and the great danger which arose from motors driving at great speed at night. He was quite sure, if things went on as they were, there would be many serious accidents from that cause. Then there was the question of the wear and tear of public roads which was making motoring unpopular as much as any other cause. It was not fair that motorists should use the roads as they were now doing without bearing their fair proportion of the cost of the upkeep of the roads. He hoped before the debate closed that the right hon. Gentleman would make a promise to introduce legislation giving the county councils full power within their own area to regulate the motor traffic, and also giving power to magistrates to inflict imprisonment for the first offence of reckless driving. He did not think such an appeal could

be made at a more opportune moment than the present, because everyone knew that the Government did not know what to do with their time. They had to adjourn the House the previous day at half-past five o'clock. Their difficulty was not how to find time for work but how to get through the session. Therefore, he hoped that the Government would see their way to present a small and useful Bill on the subject, and to that end he begged to move to reduce the salary of the right hon. Gentleman by £100.

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the President of the Local Government Board."—(*Mr. Soares.*)

MR. ARTHUR STANLEY (Lancashire, Ormskirk) said that his only reason for intervening at this early stage of the debate was that he was chairman of the Automobile Club and of the Motor Union, and that therefore he might claim to represent the moderate view of motorists, and not those motorists to whom allusion had been made. He had certainly no reason to complain of the way in which this subject had been brought before the House. The hon. Member who last spoke must recognise that motorists had no wish to avert discussion. When he asked his right hon. friend to put this Vote on the Order Paper for an early day, he promised the hon. Member for Orkney that if that was not done he would support him in moving the adjournment of the House in order to obtain a discussion. He confessed that it would be a little difficult to follow the speech of the hon. Member for Orkney, because, instead of dealing with the question on broad lines, that hon. Gentleman had devoted the first part of it to an attack on the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and the last part of it to an attack on heavy motor traffic, which practically resolved itself into an attack upon the motor omnibuses at present running in London.

*MR. CATHCART WASON said he had not attacked the motor-omnibuses at present in the streets; he had only used them as an illustration to point out

that vehicles double their weight up to twelve tons were to be allowed on our streets and roads.

MR. ARTHUR STANLEY said he was very glad to hear that it was only one class of motors which met with the hon. Member's disapprobation. In regard to the speech of the hon. Member for Barnstaple, he could not help thinking that his picture of children being kept indoors from fear of motor-cars was a little exaggerated. He had motored to a certain extent throughout the country, and he could answer for it that most of the children in country places were not kept within doors. Although he agreed with a great deal which the hon. Gentleman had said, he could not accept the recommendations which the hon. Member had made at the end of his speech. The hon. Gentleman had mixed up the two questions of reckless driving and the nuisance caused to the public by dust. Nobody deplored more than the average motorist the inconsiderate driving of certain motorists. Indeed, they had every reason to feel horror and disgust, even more than the ordinary Member of the House, when a motor accident occurred, because every accident of that kind was not put down to the individual account of an individual motorist. In fact, he had heard language of abuse in the House against motorists, which was generally considered to be the special prerogative of His Majesty's Ministers.

He asked the Committee to consider that there was an enormous amount of exaggeration in the cases which appeared in print. There was a case reported in the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mail*, with large headlines, about a labourer on the road who had been injured by a motor and left insensible with nobody to help him. On investigation it was found that there was absolutely no truth in that whatever. There was no labourer on the road and the police were satisfied that there was no motor in the district. This was pointed out, but there was no denial of the original report in these papers. Occasionally they had complained of exaggerated statements made in Parliament. For instance, when the Motor-Car Bill was before the other House,

Lord Camperdown gave an account of a lady who had been hurt in an accident on the road and that a motorist was to blame for it. When the facts were investigated it was clearly proved that the accident had arisen from quite a different cause, and that the only thing the motorist had to do with it was that when he came up he offered to convey the lady in his motor-car to her home. Of course, Lord Camperdown contradicted his original statement as soon as the facts were brought to his notice; but there was the old saying that, give a lie twenty-four hours start, it could never be caught up. There was another instance brought to public notice by the hon. Member for New Forest. An accident happened through a horse being frightened by a newspaper flying across the road. A motor-car was in the distance and the report of the occurrence was headed "Another Motor Accident." While there was a certain amount of exaggeration in these reports, still motorists in general were the last to deny that too many accidents were caused by motors. He did not wish to weigh in the scale the number of horse and motor accidents, but supposing that there were a thousand motor-car accidents last year, it was said that there were no less than 22,000 horse accidents in the Metropolitan area.

The Automobile Club were doing all that they possibly could to assist in the reduction of accidents by punishing those who caused them. The club had established a special committee to deal with cases of inconsiderate driving brought before them. There were a great many cases which could not be met by fines; but there were also a great many cases which could be met by such a committee. It would be a less punishment to pay a fine of £5 than to be expelled from the club. In that way many cases could be dealt with by the committee which could not be met by the law. Then the second action which the Automobile Club had taken was to grant driving certificates. Under the existing law in England, anybody might apply for a licence and get it without examination. In fact, it was said that a blind man had obtained a licence. Now, in France, before a driver

obtained a licence, he had to pass an examination and to show that he was fairly efficient in driving. The Automobile Club proposed to set up a form of examination; and if everybody who owned or drove a motor had to pass such an examination, he was certain that the accidents would be enormously reduced because of the absolute certainty that everyone who drove a motor on the roads was efficient. They also intended that the examination should include a knowledge of the rules of the road, and of the provisions of the Motor-Car Act. It would, therefore, be useless for any person holding a certificate to contend that he did not know what the requirements were.

He had had occasion to study the working of the Act; and he wished to endorse the opinion which had been expressed by the two hon. Gentlemen who had spoken regarding the speed limit. That was the one blot on the Act. Many motorists, including the Chief Secretary for Ireland, expressed that view very strongly when the Bill was being passed; but they were overborne. He would give the Committee a few instances to show the injurious effect of the speed limit on the working of the Act. A case was brought before the Automobile Club the other day in which it was shown that a driver attempted to pass another car in a cloud of dust. He ran into a cart, but fortunately did not inflict any personal injury. That was not his fault. When he was extricated from the *debris* he remarked that he was only driving sixteen miles an hour. The papers put the speed at sixty miles. From his evidence it appeared that he expected to be exonerated because he was not exceeding the legal limit. It should be remembered that a great number of professional chaffeurs would not be familiar with the provisions of the Act; and in nine cases out of ten they would claim to be entitled to drive twenty miles an hour. Under such circumstances the speed limit was a danger to the public. Here was another case. Mr. Edge, who won the Gordon-Bennett cup, and who was one of the most scrupulously careful drivers in the country, was informed regarding a police trap. He went himself to ascertain if it were on a fair stretch of road. He had on his car a speed indicator which he had

carefully tested; and he had two or three friends with him. Mr. Edge was in a position to prove that his speed was only twelve or fourteen miles an hour; but the police swore he was travelling at the rate of forty-three miles an hour. Mr. Edge was too sensible to take notice of a point like that. The result might be, however, that a motorist who was travelling fourteen miles an hour, and was stated by the police to be travelling forty-three, might say to himself that he might as well travel forty miles an hour as the punishment would not be greater. He ventured to suggest that it would enormously strengthen the Act if the speed limit were removed; and if they relied entirely on the section which dealt with danger to the public. He thought he could say on behalf of all automobilists that they would be perfectly willing to see the penalties increased, so long as, in cases of imprisonment, there was an appeal to a Judge. There were certain localities where magistrates were inclined to be severe on motorists; and his contention was that motorists should be dealt with equally in every district.

The question of the maintenance of the roads had been referred to. The Roads Improvement Association was attempting to deal with that matter also. The Departmental Committee made certain recommendations on the subject; which, however, involved a charge on the Exchequer, and they were consequently unable to press them either last year or in the present year. But when the Chancellor of the Exchequer had more money at his disposal, he sincerely hoped that the question of nationalising certain main arteries would be taken up. He need only mention that the Great North Road was under no fewer than twelve authorities, each of which could act as it liked without consulting the neighbouring authority. In conclusion, he wished to state that all reasonable motorists desired that the Act should be strengthened by the omission of the speed limit; and that all inconsiderate drivers should be driven off the road altogether. They were working on two principles. One was, naturally, to maintain and secure the rights of automobilists; the other, which was not less important, was in every possible way to prevent the rights of others being infringed.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said he was sure the Committee realised the admirable tone of the speech of the hon. Gentleman. If all automobilists held his views and practised his doctrines, the public would not have very much to complain of. The hon. Member said he represented the views of moderate motorists; but they had to legislate, not for the moderate, but for the immoderate motorist. Legislation was based, not on the action of honest, but of dishonest people; and the Committee, in view of the circumstances, was bound to consider a great public grievance which undoubtedly existed. He was struck with one remark of the hon. Member, who referred to what the Automobile Club could and could not do. But there were a large number of motorists who were not members of the club and over whom the club could not exercise any disciplinary action. The debate indicated that the Act was experimental and tentative, and dealt with a novel state of circumstances. The House had proceeded very cautiously in the matter. It was all very well to say that the Government should bring in a Bill and pass it. He was afraid they could not. What the Committee, however, was considering was the administrative action of the Local Government Board in connection with the Act. The Act, as far as it went, was a very good Act; and to a certain extent it had worked well. He did not, however, agree that it was a blunder to have inserted the speed limit. When the speed limit was increased from fifteen to twenty miles an hour the accidents increased in similar ratio. The Irish Secretary said he had seen a motorist driving at not more than eight miles an hour, and that that driver ought to have been brought up under Section 1. That speed was almost invariably exceeded every day in London under circumstances which made it dangerous to the public. One of the faults to be found with the administration of the Act by the Local Government Board was that nothing practically was done to put a stop to this reckless driving. The Local Government Board was entrusted by the Act with the power of making rules, and many of the grievances of the public against motor-car driving could be

remedied by the administrative action of the Board. For instance, there was no country in the world where a licence to drive a motor-car was given so lightly. No municipality allowed a man to drive a hackney car without testing his capability to drive. But here was a man in the possession of an instrument dangerous to life and property, and he was granted a licence to use it without any conditions being laid down.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the Local Government Board had no such powers as the right hon. Gentleman thought they possessed. Under the licensing provisions of the Act, the council of a county or borough were required to grant a licence to any resident in the locality on payment of an annual fee of 5s., unless the applicant was disqualified by being convicted of an offence under the Act.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER said he was under the impression that the Local Government Board had power to control the licensing authority. At any rate, the Board ought to have that power. No man should have a licence unless he was capable of driving a motor-car without danger to life and property, and the test of his capacity should be made, not by the Automobile Club, but by the local authorities. They had also to recognise that in this matter it was not only motorists who had rights to the road but the rights which pedestrians, equestrians, and vehicles enjoyed were seriously interfered with under the present administration, and they were more likely to get at the true remedy for this evil if they fairly admitted that no one ought to possess rights at the expense of other people. Of course no one denied that automobilists had rights; and the question was to what extent was it necessary to limit those rights in the interest of the community. The Local Government Board had the power to make special regulations to limit the speed of motor-cars in districts where they were asked to do it by the local authorities. But there was an impression among the local authorities that the Board did not look with favour upon

these regulations, that the trend of opinion in Whitehall was adverse to the granting of these limitations of speed. He thought to make the local authorities in this matter the sole authority would be a wise provision. The Local Government Board could not and did not appreciate the local difficulties, which could only be known by the local authority, who were the only persons to deal with them. In a large town the only persons who could know which streets required protection and which did not were the local council. There were limitations in London. Personally, he would have in the whole metropolitan borough of London a lower limit of speed than ten miles.

With regard to the punishments provided by the Act, he thought they were inadequate, insufficient, and defective. He would abolish the distinctions laid down for the treatment of first offences and second offences. If a man broke the law, whether it was the first or the second time, he should be punished according to his negligence. The system of fines should also be abolished. A fine of £5 was no punishment to a man who could afford to pay £1,000 for a motor-car. No progress would be made in suppressing these motor-car nuisances until punishments were imposed which would be really deterrent punishments to the class of people who were liable to commit those offences. At the same time there should be a right of appeal in case of imprisonment to a competent authority. The offenders were a minority of automobilists, and it would be well if the Local Government Board were to invite the assistance of the Automobile Club in protecting the interests of the public; but at the same time the Board must uphold those interests and sternly deal with a certain class who curtailed the comfort and safety of the community, because they cared for nothing but their own pleasure and defying the law.

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said no apology was necessary for discussing the extremely important question which formed the subject of debate that

afternoon. The question was how the law was to be administered in relation to motor-cars, so that other persons who had the use of the highways might not be interfered with. No one desired to deal unfairly with motorists. That was not the question. Since the roads were laid out for eque trian, vehicular, and ordinary pedestrian traffic motor-cars had come in, and it was abundantly obvious from the discussions that took place in 1903, and the experience under the Act passed in that year, that there must be careful legal and administrative arrangements made, otherwise those who were rightly and justly entitled to the use of our public roads would lose their birthright. It would be a mistake to be led away by direct instances of dangerous driving, and, on the other hand, they must be cautious of accepting the speech of the Chairman of the Automobile Club. All must agree that if all drivers of motor-cars acted truly in the spirit indicated by the Chairman of the Automobile Club no law would be necessary to protect the common highways of this country. But there were a considerable number of motorists and motor-car drivers, who so far from adopting the conciliatory and fair attitude indicated by the Chairman of the Automobile Club, disregarded every interest except their own, and it was the action of those men which had caused so much unpopularity in regard to motorists and motor drivers. Though no one was more desirous of stopping this sort of thing than the Automobile Club, he took exception to the claim they made that the administration of the law should be entrusted to a club of this kind. A large number of motorists did not belong to the Automobile Club, and he did not know whether any chauffeurs at all were members of it. If the chairman of the club had said that whenever the chauffeur of a member drove recklessly the owner of the car—who was often the person really in fault—would be punished, the club might be given more power. But was there any case in the history of the club in which a member had been expelled for reckless driving, or censured for the reckless driving of his chauffeur? In a large number of cases the person who ought to be censured or

punished was not so much the chauffeur as his master, who, by allowing him to drive in a reckless manner had conduced to the accident.

Then as to the administration of the Act of 1903. Whatever any individual's views might be as to a speed limit, that was not a question for the Local Government Board at all. Parliament had decided that there should be a speed limit, and it was the duty of the Local Government Board to administer the law. Remembering that in 1903 the present Secretary for Ireland did all he could to prevent Parliament from imposing a speed limit, but was compelled by the general feeling of the House to give way, he could not help thinking, during the right hon. Gentleman's speech, that, as President of the Local Government Board, he must have been biased and influenced by the views he still held, instead of carrying out, in a *bona fide* straightforward way as all Government Departments should do, the law as accepted and laid down by the House, and not as the head of the Department might wish it had been framed.

*MR. SCOTT-MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest) pointed out that the Local Government Board had nothing whatever to do with the speed limit of twenty miles an hour limit.

MR. CRIPPS agreed that fortunately the Local Government Board had nothing to do with it in that way, and his hon. friend would admit that he was likely to know the law so far as not to fall into an error of that kind. The first point of the right hon. Gentleman was in effect that he regretted the law was not left under Section 1 so that anyone might be punished for reckless driving. There was a complete answer to that. First of all, it was not the law, and secondly, as regarded the administration of the law, everyone who had dealt with these practical matters as a magistrate, whether under the Motor-Car Act of 1903 or under the Highways Act of 1848, knew the extreme difficulty of proving a case of reckless driving unless the reckless driving had been carried to such an extent as probably to endanger human life. Personally, speaking from pro-

fessional experience, he would not advise anyone to embark upon a case of that kind unless the facts were very patent indeed. They did not want reckless driving so much punished as stopped and avoided. Persons could not be present at their own inquest if they were driven over and killed, and in one's absence in a case of that sort every possible prejudice would be alleged on the other side, and there would be no guarantee whatever that proper punishment would be meted out to the reckless driver. After a child had been killed or damage done it was too late to punish a man for reckless driving; what was wanted was a system or a speed limit which, in the great majority of cases, would prevent reckless driving or punish the driver before he reached a dangerous pace.

He would not reargue the question of the speed limit. It was the law and the Committee were considering, not an alteration, but the administration of the law. He believed it was the greatest possible safeguard to have a speed limit, and only under some such definite rule could they have any guarantee in the great majority of cases that motor-cars were driven at speeds not dangerous to a large number of people who had an equal right to use the highways. When the question was before Parliament, he argued that the safety of the roads should be entirely under the control of the local authorities who were responsible for their management and maintenance. Those who held that view were overruled on the principle, not that if the powers were given to the local authorities no such regulations would be made, but that if the powers were given to the Local Government Board, they might have a system of regulations of almost universal application throughout the country. The right hon. Gentleman who was then at the head of the Local Government Board had to-day stated that he did not believe in the speed limit. What had been the result? Practically every application of the local authorities had been disregarded, and many other authorities had in consequence withdrawn their applications altogether. Was that fair treatment of a Parliamentary enactment in which the speed limit was introduced with the

Mr. Cripps.

common consent of the House? Furthermore, a speed limit of twenty miles an hour applied in villages and populous districts was entirely inadequate, and by its inadequacy might itself conduce to reckless and dangerous driving. The intention of Parliament was that the children of the villages—and they were an important factor in the question—should be fairly safeguarded in their everyday user of the roads, and it was a monstrous thing that in our villages and town districts the Local Government Board had done nothing; but in its dislike of a speed limit had allowed the maintenance of the twenty mile limit which was of no benefit whatever to those particular districts. Abroad, at the entrance to almost every village there were notices requiring a speed of much less than ten miles an hour to be observed while going through the village. He suggested to the Automobile Club that, if they really desired the motor industry to be fostered in this country, they should not, as they had done hitherto, appear at every one of these inquiries in order to oppose a proper speed limit in country districts, but recognising what the difficulties were, should do their best to secure a fair regulation in the matter.

Licences as they stood were absolutely absurd, but the Local Government Board were not to blame for that, as they had no powers in the matter at all. As to penalties, it was perfectly clear that those prescribed in the existing Act were wholly inadequate as deterrents. That was particularly true with regard to the owners of the cars. Without wishing to raise any prejudice on the point, all must recognise the fact that in the majority of cases the owners of motor-cars belonged to the richer classes, to whom a £5 penalty meant nothing at all. He believed it to be absolutely essential—and he did not understand the Chairman of the Automobile Club to oppose it—that if reckless misconduct in driving were proved, even for the first offence there should be power of imprisonment. The right of appeal to a Judge might be a proper safeguard. The magistrates had done their best to administer fairly a very difficult Act, and he did not at all subscribe to the sugges-

tions of bias on the part of magisterial benches throughout the country; but every conceivable precaution ought to be taken against any subject of His Majesty being unjustly imprisoned. So long as they had matters of this sort which depended not on the strict law, but on the interpretation given regarding the particular facts in a particular case, he thought the safeguard of appeal should be given, but with that safeguard there should be an adequate system of penalties, so as to stop as far as possible reckless misconduct in the driving of motor-cars. They must insist as regarded the administration and as to any alteration of the law that the users of the country roads who had used them from time immemorial, and who provided and paid for them, should have an adequate guarantee that their rights would be preserved, not by keeping motors off the roads, but by keeping them under fair control.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said it appeared to him that hon. Members wanted motorists not to be bound by any speed limits whatever, but to be simply bound by the ordinary common law of the land. That was a very great demand to make. There was absolutely no analogy whatever between the motor-car and a horse and trap. A horse and trap seldom went more than ten or twelve miles an hour, whereas the motor-car went thirty, forty, or fifty miles an hour. The comparison should be made between the motor-car and a railway train. At a level-crossing there was always some kind of signal or safeguard, and when an ordinary footpath crossed the railway the Committee upstairs said there must be a bridge over it, but here they had motors allowed to run on the roads of fifty or sixty horse-power. Motors ought not to be allowed to go at any speed proprietors thought proper. The roads were the property of all, and he did not see why people for their own pleasure should make the lives of the great majority of the people who used those roads miserable. The automobile journals had criticised Members of Parliament very unfairly, and one writer went so far as to threaten them, for he had told his friends not to vote for any hon. Member who voted for the imposition of further

restrictions. He believed the great majority of motorists did not wish to break the law. As a rule, it was the minority against whom they had to make laws. Why offenders who broke the law by negligent driving should not be punished he could not understand, and it was no excuse to say they did not know the law. It was no excuse for a poor man to say he did not understand the law, and yet it had been contended that there ought not to be a speed limit because chaffeurs did not know the law. The whole thing was absurd. He had no objection to motorists, but in the interests of the public the law of 1903 would have to be altered.

The public were naturally indignant at the way in which the law was being administered. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had deprecated anything being said that would arouse class feeling, but the way in which the Local Government Board had administered the Act had certainly produced this effect, for it had given the people in the country to understand that the law could be broken with impunity by the rich whilst it had to be obeyed by the poor.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Local Government Board has nothing to do with the administration of the law.

MR. CAWLEY: They had refused all local authorities power to regulate speed, and in that way they had given the public to understand that they were in favour of motorists and disregarded the public safety. For the first time since the old *régime*, before the French Revolution, the poor people were beginning to look upon the wealthy classes as an intolerable nuisance to their brethren and were beginning to hate them. The poor man did not like to be run over by a man in a superior position to himself, and he did not always care to rush out of the way when somebody blew a horn. He really thought motorists would be rather disappointed if they did not have a few hairbreadth escapes, because it was looked upon as a kind of sport and it was for sport that they used the roads to the terror and disadvantage of those who had to get their living on and by them. Therefore, it was the duty of the House

to protect those who had a right to use the roads and not those who desired to use them for sport.

As to the refusal of the Local Government Board to allow local authorities permission to make a speed limit of ten miles an hour in certain areas, he did not think the Government would have got the Bill through the House if hon. Members had known that motor-cars would have been allowed to run through narrow streets and down steep gradients at over ten miles an hour. Whether a pledge to this effect was given or not, at any rate there was a distinct understanding when Section 9 was carried that local authorities would have power to restrict motor-cars to ten miles an hour in areas where there were narrow streets and steep gradients. The Local Government Board had disregarded the spirit of the Act and carried it out in direct contravention to it. They had frightened a lot of local authorities from applying for these powers. In the city of Winchester the streets were very narrow and the gradients steep, and in five days no less than 830 motor-cars went round a dangerous corner. The local authority applied for powers but they were referred to the common law of the land. The same thing occurred in Leeds, a city where they were allowed to borrow millions for great works and for an education scheme. Why was not Leeds allowed to regulate the traffic of its own streets? That was not the spirit in which this Act went through the House of Commons. The town of Bury applied for the speed to be limited within half a mile of the parish church. The streets were very narrow and tortuous, and there were schools and mills whose doors opened out into the streets, but here again the President of the Board of Trade referred them to the common law of the land. That was not the spirit in which the law was laid down. That case illustrated what had happened in regard to all the towns that had applied to the Local Government Board. It had been said that not many local authorities had applied, but they were not likely to apply in these circumstances. If the Local Government Board gave the power in one case why should they not do it for everybody else when there was a good

Mr. Cawley.

case made out? The Act had been grossly misused by the Local Government Board.

Who opposed the applications which were made to the Board? They were opposed by the Automobile Club and other clubs. These clubs of rich men had more weight with the Local Government Board than any local authority in the land. That was the only conclusion they could come to. These clubs brought forward a whole lot of skilled motorists as witnesses. The same inspector was sent out by the Local Government Board to inquiry after inquiry, although it was perfectly well known that the inspector would report against the authority which made the application. It was a farce! It was putting the local authorities to unnecessary expense, because, while they were going to tell the local authorities to abide by Section 1, they sent this man out to make inquiry as if everything were above-board and straight. He believed that motors had come to stay, but whether they had come to stay, running under present conditions, was another question altogether. He was entirely in favour of a speed limit. He did not think the ordinary law of the land was good enough to regulate motor traffic, considering the people who used motors. If the ordinary law was to be left by itself he did not see how they were to get any prosecution at all. It could scarcely be proved that a man was driving recklessly unless there was a speed limit. Supposing a man was prosecuted for reckless driving, he would say that he was driving at one speed, and the police would say that he was driving at another. It was a disgrace that the law in regard to the speed limit was not carried out in the way intended when the Act was passed.

MR. LLOYD WHARTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon) said he had one or two suggestions to make to the Local Government Board which might lead to considerable amendment in what he thought everyone seemed to regard as a most intolerable state of things. His first suggestion was that a difference should be made in the cost of the licences granted according to the size and the speed power of motor-cars. He was not

dealing with motor omnibuses or lorries, or different vehicles for the use of the agricultural classes where there were no railways; but with motor-cars alone. His idea was that a motor-car up to ten or twelve horse-power was a vehicle to be encouraged. It was generally driven properly and to the safety of the public. These he would license at a charge of some £2 or £3 a year. The moment they got over that limit he would charge £1 per horse-power, so that if a man chose to drive a forty horse-power motor he would have to pay £40 a year. In this way they would get a substantial contribution towards the cost of the roads which now had to be largely maintained to allow motor traffic to proceed with rapidity. His second suggestion was that there should be a speed limit, and a low speed limit when inhabited places were approached. He was the other day at the house of a brother county magistrate in Yorkshire, who told him that during the summer he had to keep the whole of his windows facing the road closed, because otherwise everything was covered with dust, on account of the motor traffic. His third suggestion was that when they were dealing with the question of certificates to drivers there ought to be some real examination and not the absurd bogus examination now in force. He had heard, and he believed it was true, that to see what would happen a blind man applied for a licence, and got it. There should be a *bona fide* examination of some sort for everyone who drove a motor on a public road. His last suggestion was not so much to the Committee as to his brother magistrates outside. If they wanted to inflict a penalty which was really telling, let them suspend the driver's licence for a time. [An Hon. MEMBER: And the owners.] He quite agreed; if the owner chose to employ a man whom he could not trust then let him be responsible as well. Drivers did not mind a fine of £5 or £10, but if the power of driving a motor-car for six months was taken away, they would care about that. He hoped his right hon. friend would lend a favourable ear to these suggestions.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) said he wanted to draw the atten-

tion of the Committee to one or two points which were mentioned by the president of the Automobile Club in the speech he had just made. It seemed to him that gentlemen who drove motor-cars wanted to discredit the police as much as possible. When the hon. Member stated that Mr. Edge said he was only driving at twelve miles an hour, and that the police said the speed was forty-three miles an hour, he could not help feeling that this would cast discredit on the police in the eyes of the general public. He agreed with the hon. Gentleman that the police discharged their difficult duties to the best of their ability, and that they did it very well. He was sure no policeman summoned motorists out of pure prejudice. It was because he believed it was his duty to carry out the law. If professional chauffeurs were asked the law in regard to motors, they would say that it required them to keep below twenty miles an hour. But they ought to know that they must not drive recklessly or to the danger of the public. There ought to be some examination to ensure that a man not only knew how to drive a motor-car but that he knew the law of the land in this matter. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman, when considering an amending Act, would insist on more strict punishment than even the censure of the Automobile Club on the chauffeur. It must be recognised that motor-cars had come to stay, but it must also be recognised that they must be driven with regard to the public opinion of the country.

He thought the Local Government Board had been lax in interpreting the duties placed upon them by the Act of Parliament. He would mention a case which had been brought to his notice by a rector in Sussex. He said that a boy was knocked down and killed by a motor and at the inquest the driver said he would not swear that he was not going at more than twenty miles an hour. Now twenty miles an hour was a dangerous speed, for at no part of the road within 120 yards of the spot where the boy was killed was the road more than fourteen feet nine inches wide. The Local Government Board had power to issue regulations to prohibit or restrict driving motor-cars on

any highway which did not exceed sixteen feet in width. Here was a case where a boy was killed on a road only fourteen feet nine inches wide! He asked the President of the Local Government Board if he had issued any regulations that motor-cars should go at a less speed than twenty miles an hour on these narrow roads. If the Local Government Board were in favour of carrying out the spirit of the Act they would have regulations of that kind all over the country. A man driving at twenty miles an hour in these narrow roads must be driving recklessly and to the danger of the public. It was the duty of the Local Government Board to protect the lives of little children. What he would say to the right hon. Gentleman was that he should allow much greater power to the local authorities to control the speed of motor-cars. Of course, the Local Government Board should have some power to bring these regulations into uniformity. In answer to a Question the other day, the President of the Local Government Board said that he had had forty-five applications from local authorities to fix a speed limit, that seventeen had been withdrawn for various causes; that twelve local inquiries had been held; and that in only two instances had the Local Government Board fixed the speed limit to five miles an hour. Take the case of the city of Winchester. Surely the corporation of that city knew better than an inspector sent down by the Local Government Board, what speed the motors should run in the streets of the city.

He must confess, that all motorists were not so amiable as the president of the Automobile Club would have them to believe. A great many of them had banded themselves into a union, and there was a new pledge that no Member of Parliament was to get the assistance of motor-cars at his election unless he subscribed to the rules of the union. It seemed to him that the Automobile Club had taken up an attitude which might tell against themselves in the long run. After all, there was a good deal of human nature about.

MR. ARTHUR STANLEY said that if Parliamentary candidates asked for cars, the club must prescribe regulations.

Mr. Lambert.

MR. LAMBERT said that if the members of the Automobile Club were to assist candidates for Parliament who would carry out their own wishes, that was surely a species of bribery; and he hoped the Automobile Club would not take up such an attitude. What he, himself, wanted was a fair and reasonable speed on the highways. Agriculturists and others who used the highways for the purposes of their business and of getting their daily bread had the prior claim for the use of these roads over those who used them merely for pleasure. That was the principle which should animate the law; and that was the spirit which should animate the President of the Local Government Board in passing legislation through this House on the subject of motor traffic.

SIR PHILIP MUNTZ (Warwickshire, Tamworth) said that this was a question in which he had taken great interest for many years. When the Bill of 1903 was passing through the House he was in favour of a speed limit of fifteen miles an hour; and he was still of the same opinion. It was a great error to allow a limit of twenty miles per hour. What struck him was that the Local Government Board did not seem to appreciate in any way the strength of the feeling in the country in regard to this matter. In his opinion the Local Government Board had neglected its duty, with the result that there was a great and growing feeling against motoring throughout the country. In fact, it had come to this: either to stop motoring altogether, or to adopt stringent measures so as to secure the safety and comfort of the people on or adjacent to the highways, and the protection of property.

He agreed with everything that had been said in regard to the danger to life and the wrecking of the nerves of people who used the roads, but there had not been sufficient said in the course of the discussion as to the injury to property caused by the high speed at which a large number of motor-cars were driven. Take some of the good old towns and villages like Stratford-on-Avon and Henley-in-Arden. They were pretty, with picturesque residences, occupied by professional and business men. He agreed with the hon. Member for Yorkshire in saying that in such towns and

villages every door and window had to be shut and the occupants could not even sit in their gardens on account of the dust which was raised by these motor-cars. The consequence was that the whole value of their property was destroyed. This also applied in country districts to glass-houses used for the cultivation of fruit and flowers. He knew, of his own knowledge, that the value of such houses had been destroyed by the motor-cars. The tremendous dust raised by them settled on the glass, obscured the sunlight, and the fruit and flowers could not ripen or come into full bloom. [Ironical laughter.] This was no smiling matter for a great many people, and it might be relied upon that John Bull and Mrs. Bull were getting into a frame of mind that they would not stand this much longer. Why should ten or twenty thousand people be allowed to ride rough-shod over the great bulk of the population of these islands? That was a plain, sensible Question to ask; and he wanted the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to answer it.

Then agriculturists were suffering very severely from the enormous plague of dust which was raised on the highways by these motor-cars. The dust rose like a cloud, hung for a whole day over the adjoining fields or was carried further by the prevailing wind and was finally deposited on the crops to their ruination. Again, when a farmer went out with his horse and waggon to take his produce to market, a motor-car came along, driven at excessive speed, and frightened the horse, and accidents continually happened. He had seen that happening in the narrow roads of Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire and many other parts of England. Naturally farmers were very sore indeed against these motor-cars. The Local Government Board certainly did not seem to appreciate the extent of the grievance, for, instead of administering the law and assisting the local authorities, the Department had obstructed the local authorities in dealing with the evil and had grossly neglected their own duty.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said that the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ripon

Division was a very practical one—namely, that the chauffeur who drove furiously should have his licence taken away for a considerable time and that the owner of the motor should also be prevented from using it for a period. That would have a very considerable effect on gentlemen who were fond of scorching. He himself had a motor in Italy, and engaged a chauffeur who was a very astute person. In the first week he ran over a pedestrian; it happened in the second week, and also in the third. Meantime, he himself had to pay a fine and an indemnity on each occasion. He mentioned the matter to a friend, who asked the name of the chauffeur. On learning it he remarked, “Oh, he was employed by a friend of mine, and he always stuck a member of his family in the way.” When he himself told the chauffeur he would have to pay future indemnities himself the accidents ceased.

He was not in favour of a general speed limit in the interests of pedestrians. In other countries there was no speed limit, yet the accidents were fewer in number. In Germany notices were posted at particular points, stating the speed at which all vehicles should travel. That was the real way of meeting the matter. For instance, the local authority might notify that the speed through a village should not exceed five miles an hour. If the speed through a village were ten miles an hour it would be dangerous, because the village street was the playground of the children. He did not believe that the proprietors of motor-cars generally did drive furiously; but a man might be in a hurry and might drive furiously along a straight road with no person in sight. He could not understand a policeman standing behind a hedge. It would have been infinitely better if he were stationed in a village where there might be danger. In France men who drove vehicles to the public danger were punished very severely, but the speed was not limited. It was suggested that the horse-power of the car should regulate the speed; but a ten-horse-power car with a light weight could travel as quickly as a forty-horse-power car. He remembered that many years ago there was galloping in the Park. The persons who indulged in

it were called “galloping snobs”; they were attacked in the newspapers, and they were put down by the force of public opinion. He thought the late President of the Local Government Board had not fairly administered the law. It was not sufficient to reduce the speed; neither would he allow each county to lay down a limit for itself. In his opinion there should be no general law as to speed; but he would allow any village or town to display a notice limiting the speed where there was danger.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said the two grievances of the public in connection with motoring were danger and dust. These were rural rather than urban grievances. There was comparatively little difficulty in regulating traffic in towns. Urban motorists were in the main ignorant of the country districts through which they drove, and were a danger to all on the road. He did not know if it was possible to make a calculation, but he thought it would be admitted that the danger to rural dwellers had increased 50 per cent. during the last three years. If that were so it established the direct necessity on the part of the Government to endeavour to reduce the percentage of danger to a more reasonable level. The danger was universal. It applied to the cottager and to the farmer, as well as to all who used the road in a more luxurious way. It did not arise altogether from excessive speed, although that was a distinct element; but he had himself noticed that drivers of motor-cars were now more audacious than formerly in using their vehicles. An old coaching man like himself naturally noticed these things. Motorists would drive within a foot of the wheel of his carriage, and he did not know whether the horse would swerve in one direction or the other. Then, again, motor-vehicles ran round corners at a great pace, and brought an enormous cloud of dust. It was not possible to avoid danger under such circumstances. A farmer might have a young or a shy horse to train, but was now prevented from exercising it on the road, owing to the development of motor traffic. This was essentially a rural question.

They had had many remedies suggested for this danger, some of them practical and good. By all means let them insist that no man should drive a motor-car a yard along a public road who had not passed a stringent examination as to his capacity, and let the licence of any driver who failed to satisfy the police be endorsed in such a way that he would lose his licence altogether on a repetition of his misbehaviour. There was also a good deal in the suggestion that the car should be impounded. Nobody would desire to do such a thing hastily, but it certainly should be done on a repetition of the offence. The best remedy was to bring the punishment of reckless driving much more closely home to the owners of cars. He believed it would be quite right to rearrange the penalties in such a way that the owner of a car, on conviction or on the repetition of an offence in which his vehicle was concerned, should be not only fined but imprisoned. So far as could be judged from what one read in the papers, such an amendment of the law might lead to the temporary seclusion of some noble Lords, and he was not sure whether some noble ladies also would not disappear for a short time; but he did not think any harm would be done to them, and he was perfectly certain that the roads would be safer by reason of their disappearance. This was a matter upon which the public had a right to appeal to the authorities. They were talking in no exaggerated sense and in no sense of hostility to motor-cars, but because they thought it right that the public should be secured from the dangers arising from the way in which motoring was conducted.

There were one or two little points of importance to the individuals concerned which he would like to bring to the attention of the Committee. They had heard a great deal of the sufferings of villages and country towns, but hon. Gentlemen sometimes forgot that a great proportion of our rural population was housed not in villages but in scattered cottages along the country roads, and he was not sure that the dwellers in these cottages did not suffer more than any other section of the population. There was a possibility of controlling access to a village; public opinion could be brought to bear upon the subject. But take

cases such as were within his own knowledge—the case of a sick child in one of those isolated rural cottages, whose life was perhaps dependent upon the admission of fresh air through an open window. It was impossible to give the child fresh air because of the constant passage of motor-cars. Again, if a cottage door were open the meals of the poor people who lived there were often spoiled while upon the table, owing to the dust raised by passing cars. Those who had travelled in the East knew the conditions under which a meal was eaten in a sand storm, and in such a case as that which he had mentioned people were subjected to similar conditions. Then, too, washing hung out to dry was often completely spoiled by the dust raised by cars. It was not as if the dust came once in a way; it was constant, day and night. He hoped that the damage, mischief, and danger involved to dwellers in the country would not be forgotten when this question was judged upon its merits.

A remedy for the dust, he supposed, would ultimately be found in some treatment of the roads which would mitigate the nuisance. It was said that something had been found which should be applied to the roads; but at whose cost? At the cost of the people who did not want the motors, but yet suffered from all the dust which the cars raised. Was the improvement to be carried out at the expense of the many for the benefit of the few? If motor-cars were to be used for the amusement of the few they must pay for it. If it were held that those who drove motors were to have the use of the roads as part of the public, then the public must bear the cost of preventing the dust nuisance. But in no case was it fair that the ratepayers of a particular district should bear the expense. He trusted from what he had heard in that House that those who drove or owned motors would recognise that motoring was an absolutely selfish amusement, and that it gave pleasure to the few at the cost of the many. Let them appreciate that aspect of the question, and then let them seek to make their amusement less selfish and join with those who were trying to meet them in an amicable spirit.

* Mr. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.) thought that those who represented the motor interest should also take part in the debate. Therefore he rose, rather than because he had anything of value to add to the admirable speech of the president of the Automobile Club. That speech had dealt with the whole question, with a completeness, a frankness, and a wisdom which he had been glad to see so generously recognised by the Committee. He was thankful to recognise that motorists were getting off more easily than he had feared, and much more easily than they did during the debates of 1903. He came into the House with something like a feeling of trepidation, and when the hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth rose he shook in his shoes; but so far from anything terrible falling from the hon. Baronet, he could quite sympathise with much that he said. After all, the idea of the hon. Baronet was that motors should disappear from the roads, for he desired to limit them to such a speed that it would not be worth while for anybody to buy or use a car. Doubtless the hon. Baronet's ideal was that every wheeled vehicle should be drawn by a shire horse of his own excellent breed. But the phrase that the motor had come to stay was now something more than a mere phrase. Its arrival involved not only a great industrial development and social movement, but a great civilising impulse. He repudiated the assertion that motoring was merely an amusement for the rich. No doubt at present more motors were used for pleasure than for anything else; but it was certain that the movement would have an enormous industrial side, destined to be of great benefit to the country. It was true that some property in the country had been damaged by motors; but, on the other hand, a considerable amount of property had increased in value owing to the same cause. The dust raised by cars might do some damage to agriculture, but the motor industry was going to render services to agriculture incomparably greater than any harm it had done.

He protested against the suggestion that motorists were unpopular throughout the country. He motored a great deal himself and did not find that he was looked upon as a fiend in human

shape. On the contrary, he found his car added a new and educational interest to dwellers in rural districts. As to the statement that all the children in North Devon had to be confined inside their cottage homes all day, he thought it could scarcely have been put forward seriously. It seemed to him when he went motoring that not a single child in the United Kingdom was indoors. The point from which they should start in considering this question was that it was possible to drive a motor-car sometimes much faster than the law allowed and still to drive like a gentleman. He frequently drove very fast, but always stopped his car and, if possible, his engine when near a restive horse; he had never, so far as he knew, frightened a nurse with a perambulator; and had never been spoken to by a policeman. On the other hand, he had frequently been thanked by horse drivers for common courtesy, and he believed that to be the experience of a great majority of motorists. At the same time there existed a few who drove selfishly and abominably, and who ought to be suppressed by any means that could be invented. He had seen cars driven in such a way that if he were a magistrate and the drivers were brought before him he would, if he might use the phrase, "take the hide off them." Their conduct was abominable, but that had nothing whatever to do with the speed limit, because such offences happened more frequently in London than elsewhere.

He was prepared to contribute one or two suggestions to his anti-motor friends. In Paris recently a municipal by-law had been passed practically making it an offence to sound a horn in the streets. He believed the constant hooting of horns in the streets of London might be suppressed and that its suppression would have the effect of making men drive more carefully. Another objection was to the emission of clouds of blue and evil-smelling smoke. There was no need whatever for that, and a man ought not to be allowed to drive through the streets unless he could so control his engine as to avoid it, for it was caused through either ignorance or carelessness. Obviously the criticism which motorists had the greatest difficulty

in meeting was connected with the question of dust. One had to admit that that was a very grave nuisance indeed; and something or other would have to be done. Opponents of motoring would probably say that motors must go or the dust nuisance must be put an end to. Certainly motors would not disappear. They had come to stay; but the dust nuisance would have to be dealt with in some way, and he did not suppose that any great social development had ever come without bringing in its train some national burden, and when the best method of settling the dust question had been decided scientifically by experiment, that method would probably have to be put in operation at the charge of the whole community. He had made the suggestion that certain types of cars should contribute much more largely to public funds than at present, and he believed that if cars were charged so much per horse-power the burden would be much more justly apportioned than at present.

Motorists did not desire in any way to shield men who drove improperly. On the contrary, all decent motorists desired to do everything possible to bring such men to justice and suppress them. All they asked was that there should be a distinct line drawn between a real and a technical offence, that was, between driving so as to cause grave public discomfort or danger and committing any of the brutal and abominable acts to which reference had been made, and merely exceeding an artificial and technical speed limit. In the opinion of all experienced motorists a speed limit was an addition not to the safety but to the danger of the public. They had held that from the beginning, and when once that limit was abolished and every driver was made strictly accountable for what he did, they would have got much nearer to a settlement of the question and to the establishment of those harmonious relations among all sections of the public, which motorists were the first to desire.

*MR. SCOTT-MONTAGU said he fully associated himself with the remarks of his hon. friend who had spoken on behalf of the Automobile Club. It was a source of great anxiety to all reasonable

motorists that for a long time past—certainly since the Act came into force—there had been a tendency on the part of a small section of the motoring community to drive at a reckless speed, or in such a way as to cause inconvenience to the public. He could assure the Committee that the harm such persons did was resented even more by the automobile community than the people who were inconvenienced. The danger so caused and the dust nuisance were the two radical causes of the unpopularity of motorists, and if they could be removed there would not be nearly so much objection in the future to the decent use of motor-cars or even to their use at high speeds. The question of dust was not at all a new one. Hon. Members who had observed the main road leading out of London would have seen by the roadside little pumps put up 150 years ago, in the days when coaches went rumbling along the roads, and the dust nuisance was evidently then as great as to-day. He did not at all agree that the dust problem was insoluble. As a matter of fact it was in a fair way towards solution. Experiments in which he had taken a humble part had been made with a view to finding out the best way of laying dust, and it had been proved beyond all doubt that at an extra cost of about 2s. 6d. per ton there could be put on the main roads, or wherever it was required, a material which would last longer, was non-slippery, and, above all, dustless. He did not think motorists would object to extra taxation, provided the proceeds were devoted to such purposes as road improvements and dust prevention, which would tend greatly to the removal of the grievances under which the public and they now suffered.

In some of the attacks which had been made on the Local Government Board, hon. Members seemed hardly to realise that local authorities had power to put up warning posts without any application whatever to the Local Government Board. In his own county of Hampshire they had put up about 470 warning posts at dangerous cross-roads, entrances to villages, and other places, and there was no reason why that should not be done

in every county in England. A proposal that such persons who drove recklessly after passing such warning posts should be more heavily punished would receive the undivided support of motorists in the House. With regard to the reduced speed limit in towns, he did not think the opposition had in every case been altogether wise or diplomatic from the public point of view. In certain places it had been opposed where a lower speed limit was possibly justifiable. But that was not so in all cases. As to the question of a reduced speed limit in towns, there certainly were places in which, in his opinion, a reduced limit was justified. Motorists generally would probably not oppose in future in a gratuitous fashion applications for a speed limit; but if the local authorities were wise they would not ask to be allowed to schedule in every case what was known as the borough area, as that area often extended a long way beyond the inhabited portion of the borough. He entirely agreed with the Chief Secretary that, if the police concentrated their attention on the enforcement of Clause 1 of the Act of 1903, they would do more to stop reckless driving than at present, and would receive every assistance in their efforts from motorists. That clause gave most stringent and wide powers not only as regarded traffic actually on the road, but traffic which might be reasonably expected to be there. The penalty for a first offence was a fine up to £20, and for a second offence a fine up to £50 with imprisonment and the endorsement or suspension of the licence. He would not oppose the suggestion that in certain cases there should be imprisonment for even a first offence, but, all the same, the penalties already provided by Parliament were very effective, and they had been put in operation over and over again in the country.

He quite realised that motor-cars were unpopular in many places to-day, and must be so for some years to come. But every new movement of this kind must arouse opposition. On the other hand, however, the picture which had been drawn of children confined entirely to the house because of the dangers of

motor-cars was very much exaggerated. There was now a general tendency to use the roads more largely by all traffic including motors, and what was wanted amongst the drivers of motor-cars was more courtesy, but courtesy could not be enforced by law. What was required also was a little more common sense. As the hon. Member had said, they should drive on the road like gentlemen, and do all they could to conciliate public opinion. The whole motor-car movement was in its early stages. Only six years ago when he drove down to the House in his motor-car he was stopped at the gates and told that it was not a suitable vehicle to go into the Palace Yard. There had been a great change since then, for the other night, on the occasion of an important division, he noticed no less than thirty-four motor-cars in the Palace Yard. Motorists were anxious in every way to remedy the evils which existed, and they would not oppose any reasonable proposal of the Government or the local authorities to make the Bill more efficient if it came up for revision.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said they would all agree that the Committee had had that afternoon a very instructive discussion, in the course of which interesting suggestions had been made. With some of these suggestions he cordially sympathised, and there were, of course, others with which he did not altogether agree. In the course of the discussion suggestions had been made in regard to changes which it would be desirable to make in the Motor-Car Act. While he did not regret that the debate had been to all intents and purposes a Second Reading discussion upon a Motor-Car Bill, he might, perhaps, recall the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Motion before them was one for the reduction of the salary of the President of the Local Government Board and, strictly speaking, nothing was relevant to such a Motion except the administrative acts of the Board.

The extent of the administrative powers and duties of the Local Government Board under the Act had been strangely misunderstood by some speakers. One hon. Member

seemed to think that it was possible for the Board, not only to make regulations, but to see that they were carried out. That was not the case. They had power to make regulations in regard to identification marks, the registration of cars, the granting and renewal of licences, the size and colour of notice boards to be erected at dangerous places, and the limiting of speed to ten miles an hour within particular limits or places on the application of the local authority. These were the functions which the Local Government Board had to discharge under the Act. The discharge of the duties of the Board had been impugned only as regarded the making of regulations for heavy motor-cars and for the limit of speed which was to be fixed on the application of the local authorities. The hon. Member for Orkney made a violent attack on the Board and on the Committee which had been appointed to consider the question of the regulations for heavy motor-cars, which he described as a lop-sided Committee. Well, it was a Departmental Committee of which the right hon. Member for Somerset was Chairman, and it included among its members Sir William Arrol, Mr. Munro, Mr. Law, of the Local Government Board, and two eminent engineers. He did not think there was any ground whatever for suggesting that the constitution of the Committee was an unfair one, still less for the charge that the evidence taken was of a partial character and did not show the true state of the facts. It was unnecessary to go at length into the criticisms of the hon. Member for Orkney. He had indeed great difficulty in following the hon. Member, but, so far as he could follow him, he did not think any of the statements made could be justified by the Motor-Car Order. If the hon. Member had studied the Order with more care he would have found many of his objections largely mitigated.

There were two clauses in the Act under which speed might be limited by regulation of the Local Government Board. Under Clause 9 a maximum of ten miles an hour could be imposed within any limit or place, and in making a regulation under this clause the Board had to consider if it was required in the interests of public safety and not merely the

desire of the local authority. Under Clause 8 motor-car traffic might be prohibited or restricted in any highway when the width of the roadway did not exceed sixteen feet, or where the traffic would be a possible danger. Under this section the Board could take action without application from a local authority, but had not done so, nor was it desirable the Board should. Applications, however, had been received, and in respect to these criticism had been most severe. It was only fair in defending the policy of his predecessor to point out that comparatively few local authorities had applied, only forty-nine out of 277, and of these seventeen were formally withdrawn, a considerable number were allowed to remain in abeyance, twelve local inquiries were held, and two applications were granted. Under Section 9 no order had been issued. His right hon. friend had explained the reasons why the majority of the applications had been refused. He took the view that it was better to proceed under Section I, which prescribed no limit of speed, than to impose a limit of speed which might afterwards be in danger of being regarded not as the maximum but as the minimum. Ten miles an hour might in many cases be an excessive speed; and if ten miles an hour were fixed there would always be the temptation to the driver to regard any speed up to ten miles an hour as justifiable under all circumstances. No doubt, as the discussion had shown, there was great difference of opinion on the question of speed limit. He did not think it fair for the hon. Member opposite to charge his right hon. friend with having shown special favour to motorists as against the general public. His right hon. friend, in taking the course he did, believed he was consulting the safety of the public, and he was inclined to sympathise with his right hon. friend's view. Of course an application from a local authority ought to receive very serious consideration and careful examination in an unprejudiced, impartial spirit.

MR. CAWLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman send an inspector down?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he was quite ready to consider the suggestion

made by the hon. Gentleman. The motor question presented many difficulties, and would present more in the future. As the hon. Member for Barnstaple had said, motors had come to stay and the increase in their number was growing from day to day. Vast capital was embarked in the manufacture of cars, and the development of the industry showed that it would be crushed out of existence by a limitation to fourteen miles an hour. [Cries of "No" and "Why?"] Such was his opinion. He did not think that it would be the view of the Committee generally that a restriction which would seriously impede the speed of motor-cars and would threaten to strangle the manufacturing motor industry would be in any sense desirable. On the other hand he realised that public opinion had been greatly stirred by the danger of motor-cars when recklessly or negligently driven and the accidents that occurred. In addition there was the intolerable nuisance of dust to dwellers by the roadside. Difficulties had to be met without unduly checking the use of motor-cars. Something could be done by Local Government Board administration, more by increased stringency on the part of local authorities and the police, and a good deal by legislation. The Act was a temporary one, and next year it would be reintroduced in an amended form. Further, he thought that next session there should be a full inquiry by Committee or Commission into the working of the Act. He expressed no opinion on the various suggestions made, he thought in his position it would be premature to do so. He suggested to the Committee it would be hardly fair to vote the reduction, which would imply censure on his predecessor and a Department which under difficult circumstances had done its best.

MR. SOARES: Are we to go on as we are until 1907?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said he wished to protest against the selfish and reckless indulgence, at the expense of the public safety and convenience, of the rich lower class, and against the wretched technical plea advanced by the right hon. Gentleman in reply to the case put forward. As a foreigner, he

asserted that the English people in this matter showed themselves either very patient or very stupid. He could not understand why they had not taken the law into their own hands once or twice and put down motorists with a strong arm. He had received a letter from an Anglican clergyman, the Rev. F. G. Welby, of Marsden, whom he did not know, and who wrote—

"All honour to you for your gallant stand. We here live with our lives in our hands. Last November I ministered by the side of one of our school children as he lay dying in agony after having been knocked over by one of these accursed motorists. The chauffeur returned to the spot, saw the child sweltering in his blood, said he would be back in a minute, and then rattled off to Henley without offering any assistance. Railway trains travel on rails; and what is now wanted is that motor-cars should travel on tracks."

Hon. Gentlemen who represented the Automobile Club were full of righteous indignation to-day against those who went in for reckless driving. What Pharisees hon. Gentlemen were! Had they no scorchers in the House? Some months ago an hon. Gentleman opposite was fined for furious driving; and then attempted to found a breach of privilege against the magistrate who had very properly fined him. On May 15th he himself asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he would consent to a Return of titled persons and Ministers of the Crown who had been fined for driving motor-cars to the peril of the public. The right hon. Gentleman replied that a Return singling out a particular class of the community could not be prepared without a great deal of trouble. The right hon. Gentleman himself would have been first on the list, because he has been fined three times.

MR. SCOTT-MONTAGU said that the Prime Minister himself had not been fined.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL stated that the Prime Minister in answer to a Question put by himself, admitted he had been fined. He was brimming over with curiosity, and as the Prime Minister had told him he liked to be asked Questions, he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he did not think the fines inflicted were inadequate, and the right hon. Gentleman in reply said he had no reason to believe they

were. In his opinion the fines were grossly inadequate when it was remembered that they were inflicted on men who owned motor-cars and to whom money was no object. If these offences were committed by poor men imprisonment and not fines would be the result. He had tried to define the intellectual environment of various motorists, and it appeared to him that they were wanting in regard to moral sense. He thought it was a gross injustice that a man who had been fined £20 for furious driving one day should be on the bench the next, and sentencing perhaps to fourteen days a famishing boy who had stolen bread. He had a letter from a magistrate which illustrated this fact. That gentleman wrote to him that he had not the honour of his acquaintance, but he would be obliged to him if he would tell him why he (Mr. MacNeill) had made a personal attack on him in the House of Commons; that he was not charged with furious driving, which was a serious offence, but with the mere technical offence of exceeding the time limit. He did not reply to the letter, and he did not know the gentleman, but it was a curious fact that anyone should have thought that any hon. Member would have used his position in the House for the purpose of making a personal attack on anyone. He had never done such a thing in his life.

He held in his hands a comparison, drawn up by a very eminent gentleman, of the speeds allowed in different parts of the Continent and in this country. After comparing the different regulations on the Continent, he said that in New York City no car was permitted to proceed at a greater pace than eight miles an hour, but in London cars might be seen every evening proceeding at the rate of thirty miles an hour, thus rendering the streets for ladies and timid cyclists impassable. So it was all through this attempt to allow our roads to be destroyed, dust thrown in our faces, our furniture ruined, and the lives of old persons and young children to be endangered, and all for the benefit and amusement of, he believed, not more than 2,000 people. It only showed how demoralised this country had become.

He would draw attention to one more fact; and he hoped the President of the Local Government Board and also the Automobile Club would think of this. At an inquest held at Richmond on the previous day on an aged lady who was knocked down and killed by a motor-car while she was crossing the road, the jury returned a verdict of accidental death. The owner of the car, a City merchant, said he was driving at the rate of only four miles an hour, and the coroner stated that as long as the law allowed motorists to tear along at twenty miles an hour they would have to give them fair play, but he had just said to the counsel for the Automobile Club that if the Prime Minister of England had not been the chief offender the twenty mile limit would never have been adhered to. He had spoken feelingly on the subject as he had been two or three times within appreciable distance of being knocked over by motor-cars, and two people had been killed within a stone's throw of his residence in Dublin. He appealed to the House in every way possible to put a stop to this great and selfish iniquity which had destroyed rural life in England.

MR. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth) observed that in his view the regulation as to the speed limit was a dead letter. He had recently taken to motoring, and had not had any kind of accident, but he entirely agreed with many of the suggestions made by the opponents of motoring. With regard to the chauffeur, he quite agreed the licence fees ought to be much heavier as well as the tax on motors, and he would favour the imposition of a much heavier charge on the licence for a foreign chauffeur than for an Englishman, in view of the difficulty which might arise with respect to the foreigner if he committed an unlawful act. The point he wished to raise, however, had reference to the position of the law in so far as it was laid down that a person should not, under any circumstances, drive a motor-car on a public highway at a speed exceeding twenty miles an hour. It did not say at a rate exceeding twenty miles an hour, but a speed, and therefore it seemed that until twenty miles had been

run the enactment was a dead letter. He would be glad if that matter could receive the attention of the law officers of the Crown, as this was a penal Act, and must therefore be read strictly in accordance with the wording of the section. He ventured to submit, reading it in that way, that all the fines inflicted for excessive speed had been illegal.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest) said the President of the Local Government Board had pointed out that this was a Motion for the reduction of his salary. That was true, but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not consider that Members had been speaking personally against him. Such a Motion offered the only means the Committee had of getting at the Department over which he presided. It was true that Parliament had passed a certain Act, but that Act empowered the Local Government Board to draft regulations. At the present moment mechanically-drawn vehicles in London were under three sets of regulations. Those regulations were drawn by the Local Government Board, who stated with absolute truth that they were not responsible for their enforcement. That duty devolved upon the police. If, however, a policeman's attention were drawn to a particular vehicle he would say to himself, "I wonder whether that comes under one, two, or three of the regulations?" Two or three days ago he called the attention of a policeman in Park Lane to a motor-car with a trailer attached, travelling at least eight miles an hour, and the policeman stated that he was not certain under which regulation it came, that he could ascertain only by stopping the car and examining certain small letters upon it, and that he could not do that because it would obstruct the traffic. Consequently the car went on. Three times he called attention to that car with the same result. He then wrote to the Local Government Board, who informed him that if the car had certain marks on it it came under one regulation, and if it had not it came under another, but that in any case it was not their duty but that of the police to prosecute. How on earth could regulations be enforced unless the authority which had to enforce them knew under

which regulation a particular vehicle came?

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

----- EVENING SITTING. -----

NORTH - EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

(By Order).

As amended, considered.

MR. PEMBERTON (Sunderland) said that in moving the Motion which he had upon the Paper, he and those who supported him did not desire to upset the decision of the Committee to any great extent, but to try and get carried out what they understood and what they hoped was promised in the Second Reading. They had hoped the clause as put before the Committee by the promoters would avoid unreasonable competition. The point he was taking up, partly on behalf of the town he represented, and partly on the part of others affected, was that where there were tramways supported by the local rates, tramways run under Parliamentary powers by municipalities, they should not be put in a bad position. They thought the Bill as presented to the House would press hardly upon such tramways, because the clause he wished to omit would give the railway company powers for running motor-buses in towns in such a way as to compete in what was called the "pick up" traffic; that these 'buses would not only serve those who wished to go by train, but also those who wished to go from one part of the town to another, and they could not say to what extent that would compete with the existing tramways. If they did compete they must lessen the receipts of the trams and thereby impose a greater liability on the ratepayers. They were not trying to interfere with the facilities of those who wished to go to the railway station,

Mr. Houston.

but to stop unreasonable competition. The clause not only affected the towns but the country districts. The alteration he suggested did not affect the country districts in any way, and it only affected those towns where they had municipal tramways, and therefore would not interfere with the powers the company would get under this Act to serve the public in the country districts. All they wanted to do was to safeguard the existing rights of those towns and urban districts which possessed municipal trams, and to safeguard the ratepayers as far as possible. It might be urged that it was impossible for motor-'buses to compete with electric trams and that might possibly be so, but that was not yet decided, and at any rate if it was possible to compete they wanted to prevent that competition. He thought railways had quite enough to do to serve the places they now served, which in many cases they could not do, and it was therefore a great pity that they should get powers to perform a work now very well done by the municipalities. He did not ask the House to interfere with those districts where the trams were run by private companies, because he saw no reason why they should interfere with one company in favour of another.

The clause which he wished to move provided that the company should be able to run 'buses and carry on a certain amount of traffic in towns with the consent of the local authorities and of the Board of Trade. The company had to get the consent in writing of the local authority and then of the Board of Trade. That protection, he submitted, was sufficient, because if he was successful in his Motion the Board of Trade would not allow the consent of the local authority to be withheld for any unreasonable cause. He did not intend to occupy the time of the House at any length, but to put the matter before the House and let it decide. This was practically a new power. It was true it was given to the Great Eastern Railway last year, but this was the first time this point had been raised. Two or three railways had similar clauses in Bills this year but they were eliminated before the Bills went to Committee, and it was

left for this railway company to test this very important point first in Committee upstairs and then in this House. He did not wish to contest the decision of the Committee, but he thought they were justified in bringing a new fact before the House. The question was, should a railway company be allowed to so extend their position as to give a motor service all over the country or should they be allowed to extend it only to those districts which were not served by an efficient tramway service, and only then when the Board of Trade considered it should be done. That was the question in a nutshell. He begged to move.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle) said in rising to second the Motion he desired to make a few observations for the purpose of showing the reasonableness of the position its supporters had taken up in this matter. The powers the North-Eastern Railway Company were endeavouring to obtain were exceedingly numerous and were for the purpose of running motor-'buses, with which they had been experimenting, in the rural districts through which their railway system operated. Everyone was prepared to give them all assistance possible towards utilising, for their own purposes and for the purposes of the public, a system of motor-'buses in badly supplied rural districts; those who supported this Motion had the fullest sympathy with the railway company in their attempts to supply rural districts with this means of locomotion. They also wanted to use these motor-'buses for the purpose of carrying passengers, passengers' luggage, and mails in the cities and towns as well as the rural districts. In that also the supporters of this Motion went a long way with them, but they differed from the railway company when they asked for powers to enter into direct competition with the municipal tramways in urban districts. If this Bill with the Amendment went through, the company would have full power to extend their present experiments in rural districts and with permission in the district of an urban or municipal authority, but would not have power to enter into competition with a public tramway which might be on the route they wished to travel over. He

submitted that the supporters of the Amendment had a perfect right to object to the company getting any such power. But it was clearly laid down in the evidence given before the Committee by Sir George Gibb, the chairman of the company, that that was the object the company had in view. They were anxious "to get a little of their own back," which had been taken away from them by the public authorities. But, if that was going to be allowed, the tramways which had had to come to this House for their powers, and whose lines had been curtailed, would have their revenue curtailed, also and the municipality would suffer and the ratepayers be placed under greater liability.

He and those who acted with him objected to those powers being given because they thought it would be unreasonable competition with the municipalities who had to come to Parliament for their powers. In the last twenty years or so this House had sanctioned an expenditure for tramways of £28,625,000; that expenditure had been sanctioned, approved, regulated, and controlled by the powers given by this House, and now when the debt had been created on the security of the rates, was it just that they should be asked to consent to a Bill which would enable a private company which had a considerable monopoly in the North of England to endanger the position of the ratepayers who were pledged to pay part of the £28,000,000, by entering into competition with them? If this power were given to the railway company, it would be one of the strongest weapons in their hands for preventing the encouragement of municipal tramways. He argued this point from the general standpoint, because if this power was given to the North-Eastern Railway to-day, next year other companies would come to the House for similar powers and quoting this Bill as a precedent. And what would be the position of the towns in the districts which these railways served? The railway company would be in a position to threaten the municipal authorities and say, "If you get your trams we have already power to initiate a system of motor-buses and we will put them on your streets in competition with your trams,"

and owing to the great influence that could be brought to bear in small towns there would be no attempt on the part of the municipal authorities to go on with their undertaking.

There was one most significant point in connection with this Bill, and that was that this company, which was prepared to enter into competition with the tramway authorities, was not willing to enter into competition with other railways, and run 'buses in the districts served by them. That was most significant. With regard to the attitude of the hon. Baronet the Member for Berwick, whose absence to-night they regretted, and that of the hon. and learned Member for Ripon, he might say that the hon. Member for Halifax had an instruction on the Paper on the Second Reading, and certain promises were given and a certain understanding was arrived at between the promoters and opponents of the Bill. The hon. Member for Berwick on that occasion said,

"I understand the object of my hon. friend who moved the instruction is to secure that in the Committee there shall be certain safeguards or limiting words which shall, in his opinion, protect the tramways."

Those were the words of the Gentleman responsible for the conduct of this Bill through the House. He went on further and said—

"The Bill might proceed to Committee, and if there is not a settlement in Committee which is satisfactory to my hon. friend, of course there are opportunities on the Third Reading and the Report Stage when he can bring the matter before the House."

That was how the understanding had been departed from. What did the hon. and learned Member for Ripon say? He said their object was not a competitive one, and the instruction was withdrawn upon that understanding. He sincerely trusted that the Amendment would be carried.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 39, line 1, to leave out Sub-section (d) of Clause 54, and insert the words, (d) Nothing in this section contained shall authorise the company, in any city, borough, or other urban district provided with a system of tramways owned or worked by the local authority, to run any railway omnibus otherwise than for the conveyance of railway passengers, passengers' luggage, and mails to or from a station or hotel of the company, without the consent in writing of the local authority for such period as may be therein specified."—(Mr. Pemberton.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

COLONEL BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield) said that, as the Chairman of the Committee which had this particular question under consideration, he wished to say a few words. He desired to deal with this question not from its broader aspects but simply in a judicial manner. The case of the Committee was so conclusive from a judicial point of view that it needed no other. He only wished that hon. Members opposite had paid some attention to the evidence brought before that Committee. It had been said that the North-Eastern Railway did not wish to run in competition with other companies. He desired to point out that it was the Committee's own regulation that no such competition should take place. The North-Eastern Company had powers over other lines, but it was explained that they did not wish to bring their motor omnibuses to Bradford and other places where there were tramways, and so the Committee thought the simplest way would be to exclude those places where the company had no stations or lines and where they only had running powers. Therefore he thought that the remarks of the hon. Member for Barnard Castle were very unfair. Those inaccuracies only went to show how great was the danger of the House upsetting the judgment of its Committees. The evidence given before the Committee was most impartial and it was very carefully sifted. The hon. Member had tried to put before the House the great bugbear that this would constitute a precedent for other railway companies. [AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] If the hon. Member who said "hear, hear" had taken the trouble to be present in the Committee-room he would have known that these powers were already possessed by the Great Eastern Railway Company. Another railway company had withdrawn a similar clause to this because the Post Office demanded certain regulations. The hon. Member for Barnard Castle was apparently not aware that if his Amendment were carried it would take away from the Post Office the very powers they asked for from the railway company,

and that was that they should take up and put down their mails.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: The hon. and gallant Member will find that we include the mails in my Amendment.

COLONEL BOWLES begged the hon. Member's pardon and said those words had escaped his notice. He pointed out that the powers asked for were already possessed by the Great Eastern Railway Company, and at the present time a railway company, if it chose, could promote another company which could carry out all these objects without coming to Parliament. The Amendment, if carried, would deprive the railway company of the power of picking up or setting down passengers between its station and its hotel, and it was clearly shown before the Committee that there would be great difficulty in carrying out such a regulation. He thought that questions of this kind ought to be left to the judgment of the Committee upstairs. He could not help feeling that the prospects of this railway company competing against the existing tramways had been to a very considerable extent exaggerated and were imaginary. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick had pointed out, what they desired was that they should have these powers in order that the omnibuses might act as feeders to their railway system. It was true that the manager of this railway did clearly state that he would not be averse to running omnibuses in opposition to the tramways, but he could not help thinking that as he had been under a severe cross-examination he had for the moment allowed the irritation caused by that cross-examination to get the better of him. They had it in evidence, he admitted, that the manager of this railway would not bind himself not to run in competition with the tramways. It was impossible to run a new system of motor omnibuses without to a certain extent running in opposition to something already in existence. The real question was, Was this a reasonable opposition? And the Committee, after carefully sifting the evidence, had come to the conclusion

that there would be no unreasonable competition between these motor-buses and the tramways. He thought the opposition was more sentimental than real, and he hoped the House would not accept the Amendment.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said that Sheffield had a very efficient tramway system in which they had invested £1,000,000, and they did not want to have within their boundaries the competition of an outside body like a railway company. They had no objection whatever to allowing motor-omnibuses to run to and from the railway stations and the hotels carrying passengers and passengers' luggage, but they objected to them picking up passengers in other places than the station and the hotels, and so competing with the system of the Sheffield Corporation. He deeply regretted not to be able to support a Committee of the House, but this clause put forward by the North-Eastern Company was evidently regarded as a test clause by the other railway companies, and, if it were carried, doubtless next year the Midland and other railway companies would ask for similar powers. This Bill would introduce a new principle, and it would constitute a distinct hardship if railway companies were allowed to come in and compete with large corporations. He asked the House to pause before they adopted a principle of this kind, which would be very oppressive to local authorities.

SIR JOHN ROLLESTON (Leicester) supported the Amendment on behalf of the corporation of Leicester, who thought the Bill in its present form might authorise systems of traction which would compete with their tramways in a manner that might not be quite fair to those whose money they had been expending on that undertaking by the authority of Parliament. The general view of the corporation was that railway companies ought not to be permitted to take up and set down passengers except they were journeying between the various railway stations or railway hotels. Leicester had expended £750,000 upon a complete system of electric traction, and

the corporation had made special arrangements and facilities to expedite the transfer at reduced rates of passengers passing between the various railway stations in the town of Leicester in order to meet the convenience of railway passengers. This Amendment was not supported in a spirit of hostility to the railway companies, which they recognised had done great service to the public in developing the great towns of the country. He begged to support the Amendment.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) said that Nottingham did not lie in the area served by the North-Eastern Railway, but it was situated in the area of a railway company which would no doubt like similar powers conferred upon it to those contained in this Bill. He trusted that hon. Members would realise that this was a very grave question. This was not a matter which lay between the North-Eastern Railway Company and the Committee on the one hand and a few Members of Parliament who sat for constituencies within the North-Eastern Railway's area. It was a matter which lay between the railway companies which, one after another, would seek to obtain these powers if the powers were given now, and the great municipalities of this country and their tramway enterprises. It was as a precedent that he opposed the clause in the Bill and supported the Amendment.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said that as one of the representatives of the city of Manchester he should be inclined to speak on this question from a municipal point of view. A great deal had been said in this debate about the strong objection entertained by municipal councils to competition by motor-omnibuses, but he could not think that that opposition was well founded. He did not think that view would commend itself to the House, because it would be upsetting the deliberate judgment of the Committee. Too little attention in these days appeared to be paid to the decisions of Committees of the House. On the Second Reading of this Bill Amendments were put down by the representatives of the

various great cities in opposition to the Bill because it contained this clause. That opposition was modified in order that the clause might be considered upstairs, and the result was that municipalities had been protected by the clause which had been placed in the Bill giving railway companies the power of only running their omnibuses in connection with their system to and from their railway stations or hotels, so that the companies were prevented from running their motor vehicles without limitation. It was all very well to say that the tram lines brought passengers to the railway stations, but they did not enter the stations, and persons arriving with luggage would not have the same accommodation by tram as they would have by motor-buses which would take them right into the station.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): Is the right hon. Baronet aware that that is provided for in the Amendment.

SIR J. FERGUSSON said he did not think that this House should do anything which would diminish the advantage to the travelling public of competition. He could not think it was a wholesome principle that municipalities should not only be enabled to enter into this kind of trading, but that they should be protected against competition by special legislation. He regarded the proposal of the company as conferring a great boon upon the travelling public.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) contended that Committees upstairs had to deal with particular cases and not with general principles, and that the House had a perfect right to intervene when a general principle was involved, as it was in the matter now under consideration. The House had no concern with the intention of a particular railway company. What they had to consider was what would be the inevitable result of the thing as a whole. If this power were given to the North-Eastern Railway Company, every other railway company would come for it sooner or later, and it would be held as a sword of Damocles over the head of every corporation who wished to extend its system of tramways. They knew how

bitter the feeling was in regard to the competition of the tramways, and if they granted railway companies such powers the danger would be not so much what they would actually do with them as what they would threaten to do, and in that way they would check municipal enterprise considerably. The corporation of Bolton, which he represented, was not immediately concerned in this Bill, but Bolton had spent a large sum of money on electric traction, and now was the time to guard themselves, because, if this principle was adopted, it was inevitable for the whole country. All he asked for was that corporations who had spent their money on tramways should have the same protection in these matters as was given to railway companies. The clause in the Bill was opposed to a well-known principle of railway procedure. When railway companies had running powers over each other's lines they guaranteed that they should not call at intermediate stations, and that they must go from one point to another. All that the local authorities were asking was that the same thing should be done for them. The right hon. Baronet the Member for North-East Manchester said the omnibuses would go to the railway stations. The supporters of the Amendment did not wish to stop them going there, but they wanted to prevent them stopping on the way. That was the point. The railway magnates whom he saw before him should act towards the corporations in a spirit of fair play. They treated each other in the spirit in which the House was now asked to treat the corporations. The House was now asked to take a most important and just decision. It was asked to guard the rights of the masses of the people, and they would be most justly indignant if the House did not give them as much justice as was given to the monopolist railway companies.

MR. LLOYD WHARTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon) said it was a somewhat remarkable fact that hon. Members on the other side of the House were seeking to deprive the working classes of the country of a large additional means of transit, for if these buses were to carry anybody they were most likely to be people of the working

classes. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] Why not? The hon. Member for the Barnard Castle Division was there as a representative of working men, and yet he was to-night attempting to stop a means of transit which had already been approved by the House on the Second Reading of the Bill, and which had been passed by a Committee upstairs. The corporations were afraid that if the North-Eastern Railway Company tried to do their duty to the district which they served there might be some precedent set up detrimental to tramway services which had been established probably at too great a cost. There had been talk about the poor rate-payers, but the North-Eastern Railway Company paid in rates £450,000 a year. [AN HON. MEMBER: Where does it come from?] It came out of the pockets of the owners of the railway. [AN HON. MEMBER: Out of the pockets of the public.] They had had to pay one-sixth of the cost of the Newcastle tramways and one-sixth of the cost of the Hull tramways, and he thought that was worthy of the attention of the House. What was really the object which the North-Eastern Railway Company had in view? Their object was to assist passengers to get to their destination, and therefore this Bill was very much in the interests of the travelling public. Hon. Gentlemen who were opposing the Bill would, if their action succeeded, prevent a good deal of facility being given to travellers by rail which they would obtain if the company's proposal was carried out. Sir George Gibb in his evidence had said something in regard to competition.

He wished to say something as to what that competition would be in the case of Hull, which was one of the largest centres of population on the North-Eastern Railway. A passenger arriving there would find a motor-bus which he could enter provided it was going in the direction in which he wanted to go. It was very possible that the motor-bus would have to go a certain distance along the road which the tramway now traversed. If that was competition he admitted that competition to a certain extent would take place. But what about the traveller? What the

hon. Gentleman opposite proposed was that that man should have to go into the street carrying his goods or getting a porter to carry them to the tramway car which would be followed by the motor-bus for about a mile. Then he would have to get out of the tramway car and get into the motor-bus in order to get to his destination which was probably four or five miles out in the country. That was the pleasant journey he was to have instead of the one provided for in this Bill. That was the competition which the House was asked to say was so adverse to the interest of the British public. He maintained that the Bill was very much in the interest of the British travelling public. As to the earning power of motor-buses he could tell hon. Members that last year, if they were on one side or the other in that matter, they were on the wrong side. The railway company did not ask this Bill in order to earn a large amount of money. They had a great monopoly, and they were trying to do their duty to the public within that monopoly by providing a comfortable way of travelling which hon. Members opposite were trying to prevent.

*MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) said the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Manchester had stated that the House should be slow to interfere with the decision of a Committee upstairs. He quite agreed with that general principle, but when the Chairman of a Committee came to the House and said that the House had no right to put down Amendments to their Report it was taking the matter a little too far. He wished to remind the right hon. Baronet that in his speech on the Second Reading of the Bill he said he should be sorry if it were not clearly understood that a city in the position of Manchester, in common with any other large place, should not have competition against the tramways except under proper regulations approved by the city. The effect of the Amendment would be to carry out the view expressed by the right hon. Baronet. This was not a question of municipal trading at all. It was a question of general principle as affecting this House. He had had some experience of

Committees upstairs, both as a member of them and as an advocate who had appeared before them for some years, and he submitted that when a great scheme had been sanctioned by Parliament, and when great expense had been incurred on account of it, Parliament had always been careful not to sanction any conflicting scheme for a long time. This principle ought not to be departed from because the scheme sanctioned by Parliament happened to be that of a municipal body. Parliament would be stultifying itself if it refused to give careful consideration to the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Sunderland. Municipal bodies had equal rights with private companies to the benefit of the principle upon which Parliament had hitherto acted in connection with schemes which involved the borrowing and expenditure of large sums of money.

It was not necessary to go far for a precedent in support of the Amendment. There were lines of omnibuses running daily between the railway stations in London, but they did not stop in the streets to pick up passengers. A friend had informed him that on one occasion he was going to Euston Station in a cab which met with an accident, and that he had to leave the cab, his luggage being placed on the wayside. On hailing a railway omnibus his friend was told by the conductor that he had no power to stop, and that he dare not take him up. Reference had been made to the evidence given before the Committee, and particularly to what was said by Sir George Gibb. Sir George Gibb was an expert on all matters relating to railway traffic in Great Britain, and there was scarcely a case upstairs where he was not called upon to give evidence. He gave evidence in favour of an amalgamation scheme of certain railways in Ireland, and the House passed the scheme. What was the result? A few days ago the company which executed the system of amalgamation had been asked to call a public meeting of the shareholders in order to consider the disastrous position brought about by the evidence of Sir George Gibb in connection with that amalgamation. Therefore, schemes which were supported by Sir George Gibb should be looked upon with some

suspicion at least. For these reasons he would vote in favour of the Amendment.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars) said the hon. Gentleman opposite had stated that there was in this matter something in the nature of a principle involved affecting this House. He felt, therefore, as the representative of the Board of Trade, that he ought to say something about it. He considered it would be a most disastrous thing to carry the proposed Amendment. In the first place, to do so would be to upset the decision of the Committee, which had considered all the evidence and the facts in this particular case. They all understood perfectly well why so much fuss was being made about this; the drum municipal had been beaten again. So far as the principle was concerned this case was exactly the same case which was discussed in connection with the Newcastle tramways; it was the question to what extent municipal authorities, because they were engaged in a particular kind of trading, should be allowed a monopoly which would not be given to anybody else engaged in the same trade. In the case of the Newcastle tramways the proposal made was that the matter should be referred again to the Committee; it was not proposed that this House should decide the question on the spot. Why was not that course taken to-night? He thought he knew the reason. The Committee on the Newcastle Tramways Bill reaffirmed their original decision, and the municipalities or their representatives felt that they would not dare to face the House of Commons again on the subject, and, therefore, accepted that decision. But now they wished to avoid any danger of that kind by carrying their proposal in the House, most of whose Members had not considered the arguments.

With regard to the question of competition, nothing had surprised him more than that hon. Gentlemen should speak as if this were a form of competition to which railways were never subjected. It was true railway companies did get a monopoly, but they paid very dearly for it, they paid a great deal in Parliamentary expenses,

and they had to buy the ground over which their lines passed. Municipalities, on the other hand, started a large system of tramways which were not confined to their own district, without having to buy any of the land over which they ran, and if they were successful it was to some extent at the expense of the railway companies with whom they competed. The railway company, too, was probably the largest individual ratepayer in the district. When there was any talk of running trams over Westminster Bridge municipal representatives said that motor-omnibuses could not possibly compete with trams. [An HON. MEMBER: In London.] Over and over again witnesses representing municipal owners of tramways had appeared before the Traffic Commission and given evidence to the effect that owing to the greater cheapness of tramways motor-omnibuses could not compete with them. Yet when a railway company wanted to run motor-omnibuses, as in this case, the municipalities said just the opposite. The Board of Trade was compelled constantly to interfere with railway companies and to carry out Acts which were in the interests of the public, but which undoubtedly meant a great deal of expense to the railway companies; and he thought that the representative of the Board of Trade was equally called upon to use whatever influence he could to prevent railway companies from being unfairly treated.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON said there was a difference between a public and a private enterprise.

MR. BONAR LAW said that as long as this House permitted private enterprise to engage in the same kind of industry as public enterprise they were bound to see that they were allowed to compete on fair terms. For these reasons he sincerely trusted the House for once would not listen to the municipal interest. It was beginning to be a question whether this House should direct the municipalities, or whether the municipalities should control the House.

MR. WHITLEY said that as he was the Member who had taken action on

the Second Reading, and had withdrawn the instruction which he had moved on the assurance of the Vice-Chairman of the North-Eastern Company, he wished to state his reasons for supporting this Amendment. He considered that the Amendment was most reasonable. If it were carried it would do three things. In the first place, it would allow a free hand to the railway company in the rural districts and would let them carry any traffic they chose to take. In the second place, it would allow them to carry traffic to and from railway stations and hotels in towns; and in the third place it provided that where the company proposed to pick up passengers in the district or town where Parliament had authorised a system of tramways, the matter should be referred to the Board of Trade, or a Committee of this House, to decide whether the claim was reasonable and legitimate.

MR. BONAR LAW said that if the question were left to the discretion of the Board of Trade he was perfectly willing; but he understood that the Amendment would not permit the Board of Trade to settle the principles on which this clause was to be carried out.

MR. WHITLEY said that the Amendment should be read in connection with the final sub-section of the clause in the Bill which gave the Board of Trade power to alter or vary the conditions. He could say with perfect confidence that those who supported the Amendment did not desire to prevent equal competition, but unequal competition. At present any corporation or tramway company in an urban district had to come to this House, or to the Local Government Board for a Provisional Order; and why should not this railway company go through the same process? The danger of passing the clause as it stood was a very real one; it was the danger of crushing out competition. It should be remembered how the railway companies had used the canals. It seemed to him that the clause as it stood was a threat to prevent the growth of municipal or other tramways which would interfere with the railway monopoly.

Mr. Bonar Law.

*SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield) said that he would not have intervened in this debate but for the observations made by the Secretary to the Board of Trade. He thought the House had a right to expect that in a matter of this kind the hon. Gentleman would have sustained a judicial character. Instead of that the hon. Gentleman went out of his way to stigmatise municipalities for setting up a tramway system antagonistic to railway companies. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that that was unfounded. No such attitude had been taken by the municipality of Newcastle, which was the case referred to by the hon. Gentleman. In all his experience, the House of Commons in matters of this kind looked broadly at what was best for the public interest and not at what was best in the interests of either a municipality or a particular company. The arrangements which had been made between the Midland Railway and one of the great provincial municipalities was a fair compromise. They could not ignore the fact that a broad principle was at stake here. When the question of principle was raised a sort of pledge was given by the representatives of the

North-Eastern Railway that no competition was intended with the tramways. He was opposed to the railway company obtaining absolutely unfettered powers to institute motor-omnibus services in towns, and he suggested that the Bill should be referred back to the Committee upstairs for the purpose of having it made clear that claims of this kind by the railway company should be referred to the Board of Trade, and dealt with according to the varying circumstances of each particular case.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) said he would like to put before the House the case of a town with a system of electric tramways which were only just paying their way. A railway company had two stations in that town, and if they were allowed to run motor-omnibuses between the two stations, they would run along the principal streets and might almost ruin the tramways of the corporation.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 127; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 192.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hon. Hugh
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harwood.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brassey, Albert
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Caldwell, James
Campell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colomb, Rt. Hon. Sir John C. R.
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley

Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Elibank, Master of
Fellowes, Rt. Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manc'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'n'ss B'ghs)
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hon. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Grenfell, William Henry
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.

Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Kerr, John
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Lamont, Norman
Laurie, Lieut-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks NR.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Bristol S.)
Lowther, C. (Cumb. Eskdale)
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Moconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Majendie, James A. H.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, Harry Hananel
Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
Morpeth, Viscount

Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
O'Neill, Hon. R. bert Torrens
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Pretzman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert

Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
Smith, Rt.HnJParker (Lancarks)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt.Hon.Lords(Lanes.)
Sullivan, Donal
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.

Tuff, Charles
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Worsley-Tay or, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Colonel Lockwood and Mr.
Herbert Robertson.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N. E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Burns, John
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cheetham, John Frederick
Clancy, John Joseph
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Delany, William
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Flower, Sir Ernest
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gorst, Rt.Hon SirJohnEldon
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Groves, James Grimble
Hammond, John
Hardie, J Keir(MerthyrTydvil)
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt.Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry

Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Johnson, John
Jones, Lief (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kennedy, VincentP.(Cavan,W.
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Leese, SirJosephF (Accrington
London, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdona, John Cumming
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Kean, John
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Morgan, DavidJ (Walthamstow
Murphy, John
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parkes, Ebenezer
Parrott, William
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlington
Philipps, John Wynford
Pirie, Duncan V.
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp

Pryce-Jones Lt.-Col. Edward
Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Reid, James (Greenock)
Renwick, George
Rickett, J. Compton
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Slack, John Bamford
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt.Hn.CR (Northants
Stanhope, Hon.Philip James
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Woodhouse, SirJT (Huddersfd
Young, Samuel
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr.
Pemberton and Mr. J. H.
Whitley.

Bill to be read the third time.

NORTH-EAST LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for the Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
“That the Bill be now read a second
time.”

Dr. SHIPMAN (Northampton), who
had a notice of Motion on the Paper
that the Bill be read a second time
upon that day six months, said that an
understanding had been come to, and
under the circumstances he did not pro-
pose to offer any opposition to the Bill,
the promoters having agreed to accept
the Instruction which was on the notice
Paper.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the North-East London Railway Bill that it hear the parties on the Petition against the Bill deposited in the Private Bill Office of this House on the 11th day of February last by the Promoters of the Hammersmith, City, and North-East London Railway."—(*Dr. Shipman.*)

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the North-East London Railway Bill that it hear the parties on the Petition against the Bill deposited in the Private Bill Office of this House on the 11th day of February last by the Promoters of the Hammersmith, City, and North-East London Railway.—(*Dr. Shipman.*)

SUPPLY [9TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £146,954, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board."

Mr. SOARES said he understood that his Amendment had lapsed, but having regard to the unsatisfactory nature of the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board he should like to take a division upon his Amendment.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: But I have called upon the hon. Member for Woolwich.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) asked when an Amendment lapsed owing to the dinner hour was there any precedent for not allowing the Motion to be renewed?

THE DEPUTY - CHAIRMAN: The Chairman can call upon whom he pleases.

Mr. SOARES said he would renew his Motion to reduce the salary of the President of the Local Government Board by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the President of the Local Government Board."—(*Mr. Soares.*)

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich) said he had one or two things to mention in relation to the Vote, and first he desired to know when the Department intended to take some action in reference to the unequal administration of the Poor Law in London. When did they intend to consider recommendations made by various boards of guardians some two years ago? Boards were allowed to pay gratuities to deserving officers, but always they had reasons from the Commissioners why they could not have assistance from the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. That fund was at the present time very unevenly administered, and it pressed very heavily upon the poorer districts of London. The administration of the fund was most unsatisfactory, for while the city of London obtained £11 11s. 2d. and Fulham £7 15s., the amounts gradually decreased until Poplar, needing most help, received only £3 5s. 2d. per head. A clause in the Local Government Act of 1888 enabled the County Council to raise a sum of money to be paid out at the rate of 4d. per head of workhouse inmates, and no revision had been made since 1888. Under that clause the City was entitled to £6,672 and got £9,840, while Poplar got £10,500 while being entitled to £22,500. If the rate were equally divided

over the whole of London, Poplar would be paying 7s. instead of 12s. in the £, or 4s. 6d. per head of the population, for the maintenance of their poor. The object of this fund was to equalise the burden all over London. They had claimed a good many times that the poor of London belonged to the whole of London, and that the Metropolis should be one and not thirty parishes. It seemed to him downright robbery that in one parish of the Metropolis which was a very poor locality they should have to pay 2s. 6d. in the £ as the poor rate whilst in another rich parish the rate was only 3d. in the £. At the present time in Poplar they were paying £38,000 a year in outdoor relief, and that meant that every man, woman, and child there paid 4s. 6d. per head to maintain the poor. The Prime Minister himself had pointed out the unequal burden of the poor rate, and the President of the Local Government Board ought to make the Order so complete as would enable the poor districts to bear their burdens easier. Instead of a rate of 12s. in the £ the proper share for Poplar was about 7s. in the £, and what a difference that would make to Poplar.

The last Order issued by the Local Government Board with reference to underfed children had been a great disappointment to every one. They had thought the guardians would be carefully excluded from any interference with the underfed children, and that the education authority would have power to make a little additional grant. The whole system was cumbersome, and applied only to children living with their fathers and whose fathers were permanently impoverished. Could anybody define exactly what poverty meant? They were pleading for the children of those who were out of employment. Various associations had been started in London, such as the London School Children's Dinner Association and the "Referee" fund, and they realised that there were other children who required to be fed besides those provided for in the circular, and these associations treated them in a proper manner. With regard to the recovery of any sum that might be incurred in the feeding of children in consequence of the parents neglecting to maintain them,

let them suppose that a certain number of children were attending school and the father had neglected to maintain them. They might even suppose that the mother was too lazy to get up in order to get the children their breakfast. That had been given as an instance where the children ought not to be fed. The President of the Local Government Board said in that case they ought to feed the children and then they could see to the parents afterwards. Supposing that in such a case the feeding of the children of these negligent parents went on for a week at a cost of 1s., and they then resolved to commence an action against the father. What would it mean? They would have to create a department to find out whether the man was a responsible person who could afford to pay. They would have to look up the evidence of the teacher to find out whether the children were habitually underfed. Having accumulated all this evidence they would then have to employ a solicitor to place the case before the magistrates, and they would have to call their officers and an endless number of witnesses to prove the case conclusively. Therefore to recover this 1s. they would probably have to spend 30s. in the process. He did not want such parents to escape, but why should they throw good money after bad in that way. He protested against the argument that an elaborate system of legal machinery should be set in motion at great cost to recover 1s. from a parent who did not fulfil his duty by properly feeding his child.

His suggestion was that the education authorities should be allowed to co-operate with the existing charitable agencies to fill the gap, that they should make an effort to preserve the independence of the children from the Poor Law taint, and that fathers and mothers should not be allowed to drag their children with them into the work-houses. The demoralising effect of associating the children with the Poor Law was beyond exaggeration. The guardians already had the power to subscribe to any institution that could render useful aid to the administration of the relief of the poor. How easy it would be, then, for any properly-organised association to come to the

guardians and ask for a subscription for the underfed children, and thus they might remove the taint of the Poor Law from the children at once. This could be done until such time as the House decided that the local authority should undertake this duty without any voluntary association at all. He might be asked what would he do with the blackguardly father and mother who refused to maintain their children? There was only one way of dealing with them, and he would send them to prison. The teachers in the schools would be able to say to them, "Here is a man in receipt of good wages" or "Here is a woman whose income is so much." If such parents habitually neglected their children and refused to pay for their food, of course the children ought to be fed in the meantime. He reminded the Committee that there was a society known as the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children which could deal with such cases. This society had done excellent work in the past and it would do excellent work in the future. If his suggestion were carried out the teachers in such cases as he had alluded to might communicate with the guardians, who in turn might institute a prosecution against the man or woman for neglecting to maintain their children, and in that way they would get all the safeguard they wanted, and at the same time they would have secured that no underfed child would be in attendance at school. It was because he saw, from information received from all over the country, that the Local Government Board Order, issued in all good faith, meant increased officialism and increased expenditure without any advantage to the children, that he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to withdraw the Order and adopt the suggestion he had made.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he differed from the hon. Member, to whose remarks he was sure the Committee had listened with sympathetic interest, in feeling deeply grateful to the President of the Local Government Board for the action he had taken in this matter. When Parliament met it appeared from Questions that

were put that the Local Government Board had not taken into consideration the Report of the Committee on Physical Deterioration or taken any steps with regard to the children whom that Committee found were in the habit of attending school in a state of semi-starvation. The then President of the Local Government Board took the matter under his personal consideration, and doubtless the circular which the Board had issued was the best that could have been done in the circumstances of the case. It was a clumsy and, he dared say, a very imperfect method of meeting the difficulty; but it was the only method which the President of the Local Government Board could have adopted without further legislation, which in the present session was practically an impossibility. Whilst he thought there was a great deal of truth in the criticisms passed, he did not think the circular was one which could not be worked if the local education authorities and the local boards of guardians would co-operate with each other in order to carry out its provisions. The circular established this—that it was a matter for the concern of the local education authority to see that the physical condition of the children in the schools was properly attended to. That was a great gain. The local education authority had no power to spend the school rate in relieving the necessities of the children, but it was their duty to apply to the Poor Law guardians to provide the funds for relieving those children who were in a state of absolute destitution.

He agreed that all this could be extremely well done by the proper organisation of volunteer relief committees, and he read the circular as encouraging the formation of such committees, but it was essential that those volunteer committees should possess some kind of public authority. The great mistake in the administration of the Poor Law was not that voluntary assistance was not availed of, but that those who rendered voluntary assistance were not clothed with public authority. In Germany there was a system under which the municipality could call on individuals to render aid in the administration of the Poor Law. In most German cities there was a regular staff of volunteer agents who visited the poor in

their homes by public authority. He believed that if a system of that kind were carried out in this country a great many of the difficulties regarding the condition of the children would disappear. It was done by the late London School Board in a great many districts. They appointed volunteer committees to visit the children in their homes and to inquire into the domestic circumstances of those who were in an unsatisfactory physical condition, and where the system was well carried out it produced the most remarkable amelioration in the condition of the children. In Seven Dials before the appointment of a committee £40 was spent every winter in an imperfect attempt to feed the children; now a sum of £5 per annum not only fed but clothed the children who required assistance. This result was brought about by visitation and urging parents to do their duty; in short, by the sort of public pressure that was brought to bear. He believed the effect of these circulars of the Board of Education and Local Government Board, if properly carried out, would be to set on foot some organisation of that sort. The experience we should gain would enable such legislation as would give additional powers to the education authority to be carried out next session, probably with the universal assent of the House.

Those who were taking up the case of children in the schools did not mean to stop at feeding. Medical aid was also of great importance, and exactly the same principles applied as to feeding. They must take care that proper medical aid was given to all the children in the schools. There was a certain conflict of authority between medical officers of health and boards of guardians, and whereas the experience of the medical officers led them to urge the poor to send for the doctor on the appearance of the first symptoms of illness, the policy of the guardians was rather to deter people from applying for medical relief. He urged that in the interests of the public health generally

people should be encouraged, particularly in the case of children's complaints, to make the earliest application for medical assistance. The doctors said that phthisis could be stamped out altogether if they could only act at once upon the half-starved children, who were the seed-bed in which the disease took its rise. He hoped, therefore, the President of the Local Government Board would apply to medical relief exactly the same principles as to starving children.

* DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.) welcomed the Order which had been issued in respect to the feeding of hungry children, but expressed the fear that on three grounds it would prove in practice to be almost a dead letter. It would be a dead letter in London because, as the matter was left to the boards of guardians, the charge resulting from it would be a local and parochial charge and not a county charge, and therefore the poor parishes, with their very heavy burden of rates, were not likely to undertake it. He would ask the President of the Local Government Board whether it was not possible without any serious legislation to make any expenditure under this Order a charge on the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. The whole of the county area would then contribute, and he was not sure that the West End would not be glad to be called upon to bear their share in such a deserving cause. Again, the Order did not deal at all with the case of any child which was not living with its father, and the cases of greatest distress were generally those where the mother was a widow or had been deserted by her husband. What was to be done about these children? They formed a substantial proportion of the whole, but they were left out completely by this Order. The third ground was that the Order left it entirely to the discretion of the guardians whether or not fathers should be disfranchised. If a father had neglected his child when he could have fed it he thought that man should be disfranchised, and treated in the most severe manner. But when it

could be shown that the child was hungry through no fault of the parent, because the father was out of work, for instance, in that case he should prefer that the decision to disfranchise should not rest with a hard-mouthed guardian who was not anxious to begin operations under this Order. Under such circumstances he did not think the father ought to be disfranchised. There was only one way in which this Order might be effective, and that was that where there were voluntary agencies in existence with the necessary machinery the guardians should make a lump sum contribution to their funds from time to time. The Poor Law treatment of the case was the wrong one. There was the possibility of inflicting a grave injustice on the parent, and that was a very serious responsibility to impose. If he were a teacher he would seriously consider his position before he recommended that a child should be fed under this Order.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Ep-ping): Why?

*DR. MACNAMARA: Because I might be inflicting injustice on the parent.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: But you would inflict a graver injustice on the child.

*DR. MACNAMARA said in that case the child should be fed at once, but it was a serious responsibility to place on the teachers. It might mean quite undeserved disfranchisement. He thought the Order had damped down a movement which was fraught with good to the children, and, frankly, while grateful for the spirit which prompted it, on the whole he should have

preferred that it had not been issued, so that they might have had something better and more permanent. As it was, they would be compelled to go on until they got a complete acknowledgment on the part of the community as to its responsibility for the physical condition of the children.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said he could not quite follow the argument of the hon. Member for Woolwich, who complained on the one hand that there were so many exceptions to the Order that it might as well not have been issued, while on the other hand he contended that its operations would cause the guardians to throw good money after bad. These two contentions seemed hardly to be in harmony. The circular issued by the Local Government Board invited the guardians to co-operate as far as possible with the voluntary associations in the work of relieving underfed children, but it did not propose that they should do so by way of contribution. The Board were strongly urged to do what they could by way of administration without fresh legislation, and in response to that appeal this Order was issued. Without fresh legislation it would not be competent for the Local Government Board to empower the guardians to contribute towards such associations.

MR. CROOKS: Then how are we to co-operate with them?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said co-operation without contribution was not as difficult as the hon. Member seemed to suppose. The boards of guardians

would be entitled to use the associations as their agents. The associations might feed the children, and the guardians might pay the associations for the expenditure that was incurred.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): A lump sum.

MR. GERALD BALOUR said that as far as he knew it might be a lump sum, but it would have to be a definite payment for the assistance given, which was a different thing from a general contribution from the guardians to such associations.

The hon. Member for Camberwell seemed to fear that the Order of the Local Government Board might prove to be a dead letter. His first reason was that the charge would be parochial charge and not a Metropolitan charge. In his opinion, it was a matter for careful consideration whether in any future legislation this charge ought to be thrown on the Metropolitan fund. That, however, could not be done without legislation. The hon. Member's second reason was that the Order did not deal with any child not living with its parent. It was impossible for the Local Government Board to deal with those cases without fresh legislation, because the Poor Law Act of 1834 did not empower them to do so. The hon. Member also complained that the Order left the guardians to determine whether a parent should be disfranchised or not. He thought the hon. Member was under a complete misconception. The Order did not alter the existing law. If the guardians provided food for a destitute child, the parent was *ipso facto* disfranchised, because it was held to be relief given to the parent, and

Mr. Gerald Balfour.

he believed that would still be the case, even if the sum expended was subsequently repaid. He could not argue the legal point, but the question had been carefully considered, and that was the conclusion he had come to. The last thing the House would desire to do was that a person who could provide food for his children but neglected to do so should be relieved of the penalty of disfranchisement because the guardians recovered the money by process of law.

DR. MACNAMARA: I agree.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR concluded by saying that the Order as it stood was the utmost that the Local Government Board could do without legislation.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD thought the hon. Member for Woolwich had overlooked what was really a great point in the question before the House, viz., that it was the duty of the Government to do the best it could for these children without fresh legislation.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 1st June; *Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 188.]

Adjourned at five minutes after
Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 2nd June, 1905.

INTRODUCED.

Edward Stuart, Lord Bishop of Southwark, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Local Government Provisional Order (Gas); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6).

Also the Certificates that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bills:—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8).

Also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Rhondda Urban District Council; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway.

And also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with:—Liverpool Corporation.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Liverpool Corporation Bill. Examiner's Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday next.

Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent, and the consent of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, in right of his Duchy of Corn-

wall, signified, and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Great Western Railway (New Railways) Bill. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2^a.

London Gas Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned on Wednesday last over yesterday; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

London Gas Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Rosse, a member of the Select Committee, be appointed chairman of the said Committee; read, and agreed to.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (No. 1) Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Morley Corporation Bill; Brentwood Gas Bill; North Sussex Gas Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; Croydon Corporation Bill; Aberdare Urban District Council Bill. Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee adjourned yesterday over this day, and pray leave not to sit on Monday next until Two o'clock; read, and leave given accordingly.

Woolwich Borough Council Bill. The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The order made on

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the 23rd of May last discharged, and Bill committed.

Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Skegness Water Bill; Bolton Corporation Bill; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels) Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Dundee Water Order Confirmation Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendment agreed to.

Ilfracombe Harbour and Improvement Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.]; Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Minutes of evidence and proceedings before this House on the Second Reading, together with the documents deposited in each case, returned from the Commons.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill (No. 97); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill (No. 98). Read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Committed. The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill.

House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3^a on Monday next.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill. Read 3^a (according to order), and passed.

Donovan's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Monday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

Twenty-third Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1904. Part I. General Report.

TREATY SERIES.

No. 14 (1905). Convention between the United Kingdom and Austria-Hungary providing for the settlement by arbitration of certain classes of questions which may arise between the respective Governments; signed at London, 11th January, 1905.

No. 15 (1905). Treaty between the United Kingdom and Cuba for the mutual surrender of fugitive criminals; signed at Havana, 3rd October, 1904.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3387. Japan (Kobe and Osaka).

No. 3388. Bolivia.

No. 3389. France (Pondicherry and Karikal).

No. 3390. Germany (Supplementary Report).

No. 3391. Netherlands (Rotterdam).

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 AND 1888.

Special Report by the Board of Trade under Section 1 of the Electric Lighting Act, 1888.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.

Order in Council of the 29th May, 1905, giving effect to a supplementary Convention with Switzerland, amending Article XVIII. of the Extradition Treaty of 26th November, 1880.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Report by the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords and the Chairman of Ways and Means in the House of Commons (1) that the provisions of the Wemyss Dock Order are of such a character that they ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order; (2) that, save as aforesaid, the Provisional Orders for which petitions were presented to the Secretary for Scotland on or before the 17th of April, 1905, be allowed to proceed, subject to such recommendations as may hereafter be made with respect to the several orders.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of St. Andrews, under the provisions of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1903-1904.

Annual statistical report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrews to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889, for the year 1903-1904.

POLICE ACT, 1890.

Correspondence relative to the refusal of the Secretary of State's certificate under Section 17 (2) of the Act to the River Tyne Police Force, for the year ended 29th September, 1904.

INDIA (PROGRESS AND CONDITION).

Statement exhibiting the moral and material progress and condition of India during the year 1903-1904. Fortieth Number.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Account of the receipts and expenditure of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland, for the year ended 31st December, 1904; together with the

Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon.

HARWICH HARBOUR.

Abstract of the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the Harwich Harbour Conservancy Board from the time of their incorporation down to and inclusive of the 31st March, 1905.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EXTRADITION BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

NAVAL AND MILITARY MEDALS BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next.

AGRICULTURAL RATES ACT, 1896, ETC., CONTINUANCE BILL.

Read 1^a; and to be printed. (No 96.)

RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN.

***LORD NEWTON** rose to call attention to the correspondence recently presented to Parliament relating to East India (Afghanistan). He said: My Lords, in drawing attention to this Parliamentary Paper, I need hardly observe that it is much more remarkable for what it does not contain than for its actual contents. The only item of novel intelligence which I have personally been able to gather from it is that the Amir of Afghanistan has advanced or been advanced from the rank of Highness to that of Majesty—a fact which possibly may be of some importance and which will no doubt be dealt with by my noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for India when he replies to me.

It is quite unnecessary for me on this occasion to enter into the question of our past relations with Afghanistan, but I may briefly observe that, as everybody knows, the relations between the Indian Government and Afghanistan were in what I may

call an extremely unsettled condition until July, 1880, in which month a letter was sent to the Amir from Sir Lepel Griffin in which it was declared that if any foreign Power should attempt to interfere in Afghanistan, and if such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on the dominions of the Amir, in that event the British Government would be prepared to aid His Highness to such extent and in such manner as might appear to the British Government necessary in repelling it, provided that the Amir followed unreservedly the advice of the British Government in regard to his external relations. This was followed by a letter from the then Viceroy, the noble Marquess on the Front Bench opposite (the Marquess of Ripon), dated June 16th, 1883, in which this assurance was repeated and an undertaking given that a yearly subsidy of twelve lakhs of rupees should be paid to the Amir for the purpose of improving the defences and reorganising his army on his north-western frontier.

As long as the late ruler, Amir Abdur Rahman was alive, the conditions laid down by the Indian Government were complied with. He accepted rectification of frontier at our instigation, although it involved a loss of territory to himself; and in November, 1893, an agreement was entered into with him by the British Government. The assurance of assistance was repeated, the pledge was renewed, and in order, to use the words of the despatch, "to mark our sense of the friendly spirit manifested by the Amir" the annual subsidy was raised to eighteen lakhs of rupees annually—equal, roughly, to £120,000 a year—and the importation of arms into Afghanistan was permitted without, so far as I know, any restrictions. We now know from the Paper which has just been presented to Parliament that the result of the Mission is the reaffirmation of this old agreement of 1893. It is perfectly obvious that this agreement must be read and interpreted in accordance with the very important statements which have been recently made by the Prime Minister in this country. On January 13th of this year the Prime Minister, speaking in Scotland, said that the problem of the Army was the problem of the defence of Afghanistan—not the defence of

India, which is a very different thing, but the defence of Afghanistan; and quite recently he has made other most important speeches upon the subject, the effect of which practically is that any attempt on the part of Russia or any other foreign Power to violate the integrity of Afghanistan or to insist upon railways will be treated by us as practically a *casus belli*.

There is nothing which I personally detest so much as Jingoism, and especially irresponsible Jingoism, and I think that much benefit is derived from a clear pronouncement as to what you intend to do; and I will go so far as to say that I believe many of the foreign difficulties in which we have found ourselves involved in recent years have been due to the lack of such definite announcements. I take, for instance, the announcement of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs upon the question of the Persian Gulf; that announcement could only be beneficial in its nature. But at the same time, whilst everybody probably approves of the definite declaration which has been made by the Prime Minister with regard to the exercise of foreign influence in Afghanistan, I am bound to say, personally, that I am, at the present moment at all events, unable to see how we are going to carry out our pledge to maintain the integrity of Afghanistan under the present arrangements, by which, as the House knows, we have undertaken not to interfere in any way with the internal administration of that country.

I think it is fairly obvious that what might have been, and doubtless was, perfectly satisfactory in 1893 can hardly be regarded as equally satisfactory in 1905. In 1893 the Amir Abdur Rahman was still alive. He was an instance of a highly intelligent and absolutely despotic Oriental, who did precisely what he chose in his own country and had very clear intuition as to where his interests lay. But I need hardly point out that the situation at the present day is totally different from what it was in 1893. The Russians have now got two strategic lines of railway which would enable them to bring practically unlimited numbers of troops whenever they please to the actual frontier of

Afghanistan. The danger in fact is admitted by the Prime Minister to be no longer a visionary one but a real one, and he made the statement which I have quoted in support of it.

The situation has not only altered in regard to the change in the Russian dispositions and in regard to the Russian forward movement; the situation is not the same in regard to Afghanistan as it was in 1893. Everybody knows that during recent years and since the death of the late Amir the relations between Afghanistan and the Indian Government have been far from satisfactory, and I do not think that people in this country in the least realise what I may term, without exaggeration, the extremely humiliating position in which we are placed in regard to Afghanistan. Nominally, Afghanistan is a friendly and protected State. Actually, while the Afghans are ready to take our money and while they count implicitly on our assistance, they practically claim to be an absolutely independent nation, and at the same time they do not treat us as a friendly Power, unless appearances are entirely fallacious, but as a hostile Power. Look at the actual facts of the case. Whereas we allow absolute and unrestricted liberty to the inhabitants of Afghanistan to do what they like; whereas we allow them to enter our country, to trade in it and do practically whatever they please, Afghanistan is a sealed country so far as the British Empire is concerned. No Englishman, or, so far as that goes, no European, is allowed inside the country. If you stand on the wrong side of the frontier you are liable to be shot down like a dog. They, as everybody knows, will not allow us to maintain a Resident or representative in the country. I believe I am correct in saying that no British-Indian subject is ever allowed to enter the country, or, if he does enter it with a caravan or in that kind of way, he does so at his own risk. They place every obstacle in the way of trade; they maintain military posts along their frontier as if we were contemplating an invasion of their country, and they even carry ill-feeling so far as to forbid any inhabitants of Afghanistan to use our railway which runs up to the Afghan frontier.

In view of this state of things it is not very surprising, as I say, that relations between the Indian Government and the Afghan Government have not been particularly satisfactory, that the Indian Government found it necessary to suspend permission for the importation of arms, and that the payment of the annual subsidy became a matter of contention; and it was clearly in order to remedy this state of things that a Mission was sent to Kabul in the autumn. The Amir replied by sending his son to Calcutta, and as I observed a tendency to attach exaggerated importance to this Mission, perhaps it would be as well to explain that the Amir's son is a youth of sixteen and that it was obviously only a Mission of a purely complimentary and ceremonial character. The net result of the Mission to Kabul, which, of course, was the real Mission, is this—that we continue to pay the increased subsidy of eighteen lakhs of rupees, and we are, I understand, going to pay up the arrears, which amount to something like £400,000; yet, in spite of these concessions on our part, we have obtained no better terms than we obtained in 1893.

I would like noble Lords to consider seriously what this agreement really comes to. It really pledges us, in the event of hostilities breaking out between the Afghans and a foreign Power—which, of course, can only be Russia—to assist the Afghans in repelling such an attack and in recovering for them any such territory as may be annexed by the foreign Power; and I am afraid that the dangers of such an occurrence are considerable. The moral effect of the war in the Far East is felt, it is no exaggeration to say, all over the East. The Afghans are, unfortunately, an ignorant people, and, like other semi-civilised races, it is highly probable they are imbued with the idea that they are quite capable of fighting the Russians with a fair prospect of success. If the agreement means anything at all, I contend it means that we are bound to go to the assistance of these people and to recover for them any territory which they may have lost. It may be contended that we are protected by the wording of the treaty, because the treaty says that we shall undertake to help them by such means as shall appear

proper to us; but I cannot believe for a single moment that there can be any other interpretation placed upon it by the Afghans than this. They must interpret it in the sense that we are bound to go actively to their assistance and fight for the recovery of their territory. It certainly would be no consolation, or a very poor consolation, to the Afghans to be told, supposing they are invaded by Russia, "Oh we should like to help you very much. It is, however, not convenient to send an army to your frontier, but we are about to engage in bombarding Kronstadt, Odessa, or some other place which may be convenient to us." I confess it appears to me that, in honour, we seem bound to carry out this agreement in the sense in which it must be interpreted by the Afghans themselves.

Here I would like to ask anybody who has bestowed a moment's thought on this question, how we can do it. In the first place, with our somewhat antiquated military system we have not got the men to wage a long war with the Russians in Central Asia, and, in the second place, under this agreement we cannot get our forces to the Russian frontier of Afghanistan without enormous difficulty. If one country undertakes to protect another it has a clear right to insist that that duty shall be rendered as easy as possible, and it is clearly our right and our interest that the condition of Afghanistan should be made as sound as is possible under the circumstances. We are, therefore, clearly entitled to have a representative in the country in order that we may be informed as to what goes on there. Our knowledge of Afghanistan is of the very vaguest character. We really know very little about the condition of the country, and we are extremely ignorant of a great part of the physical characteristics of that country. The unknown parts of it ought to be surveyed. As I have said, we know very little about the physical characteristics of the country, and a great authority on Indian frontier questions states in an important work on this subject that it is probable that the roads and passes of Afghanistan were better known to the Macedonians in the year 335 B.C. than to the English

Intelligence Department in the year 1900.

If we are going to their assistance with our armies, clearly we ought to be allowed to send British officers to re-organise the Afghan forces, which, by the way, are greatly overestimated in this country. We ought to be allowed to have telegraphic communication with the principal towns; and, finally, it is, I think, clear that we ought to be allowed to prolong the existing railways to such strategic points as may be considered desirable. The fact that we have vetoed the construction of Russian railways in Afghanistan is absolutely no reason whatever why we should place any self-denying ordinance upon ourselves in regard to this matter. As a matter of fact, we have two main railways leading straight to Afghanistan, but both of them terminate in the air. For a long time we have been preparing for the extension of the railway to Kandahar, and the material for that extension has been lying ready to be used for several years past. I do not know that these are extravagant provisions to put forward, but they are, in my opinion, only the minimum of what we have a right to expect in view of the undertaking we have entered into.

Personally, I can hardly bring myself to believe that the Indian Government would have consented to the despatch of this Mission had they known that nothing more would have come of it than the mere reaffirmation of the agreement of 1893. I presume from the fact, which I observed in the papers this morning, that the members of this Mission have been decorated, that the Home Government are satisfied with the result of the Mission. But I confess that I should much like to know what is the opinion of the Indian Government upon that result, and it would be extremely interesting if my noble friend would enlighten us upon this particular point. That is practically all I have to say on the subject, but I cannot conclude without making this observation, that I do not think we can fall into any greater error than to assume that, because the Russian schemes have met with a severe check in the Far East, therefore Russian activity in the Middle

East and the Near East will be paralysed. I do not believe that this is an assumption which will hold water for one single moment, and if I am told, as I possibly may be, that I have committed a foolish or indiscreet action in raising this subject, my reply is that you cannot dispose of difficulties by ignoring them, or by keeping silence about them. I trust, therefore, that my noble friend will give the House a full statement upon this subject.

* THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (The Marquess of BATH): My Lords, my noble friend has given your Lordships a description of what I understand he would have recommended should have been the policy of His Majesty's Government in dealing with the new ruler of Afghanistan. I may, perhaps, be permitted to congratulate my noble friend on his return from that portion of the world and on the interest which he has shown in our affairs there. The noble Lord dealt with a large number of questions, and I trust that your Lordships will excuse me if I am unable to follow him absolutely in every detail, or entirely to satisfy his curiosity. The first matter that my noble friend alluded to was the title at the heading of the treaty, where the Amir is described as "His Majesty." It has always been the recognised custom in our correspondence and treaties with Afghanistan to use the Persian language; and this treaty is a literal translation of the Persian text. I do not know whether any great importance is to be attached to this subject; after all, the Amir is the ruler of his own country—it is in its internal affairs an independent nation—and he is, I take it, entitled to assume the title of "His Majesty" if he is so inclined.

Then my noble friend said that this Parliamentary Paper is remarkable not so much for what it contains as for what it does not contain. I do not know to what my noble friend refers, but I would venture, as he has raised the subject, to assure your Lordships that His Majesty's Government have placed before the House all the Papers that they felt they were justified in laying with due regard to the public interest. It was, as your Lordships will, I trust, recognise, impossible to publish the whole of the correspond-

ence, and a garbled version would certainly have been most inadvisable. My noble friend has attacked the treaty because it is, as I informed the noble Lord opposite earlier in the session, a continuance of the previous arrangement with the late Amir; and he asks how we are going to carry out our pledge to defend Afghanistan while we do not interfere with its internal administration. I may remind your Lordships, as is shown in the Papers which have been presented to the House, that there were distinct undertakings which were given to the late ruler of that country that we had no intention of interfering with the internal affairs of his dominions, and that we had no desire to establish a British Resident at Kabul. We expressed our desire, however, which was afterwards carried out, to have a Mohammedan Agent at that place; and this country has throughout consistently adopted the policy which was then foreshadowed, and there has never been any serious attempt to establish a British Resident in that country.

I do not know what my noble friend suggests should have been done had the ruler of Afghanistan objected to the proposals which he has just now placed before the House. Sir Louis Dane was despatched on this Mission, not with the intention of holding a pistol to the head of the Amir, but with instructions to enter into a friendly conference with him and to obtain an amicable settlement with regard to the Amir's relations with us. In these negotiations the hand of our Envoy was not tied as to details. My noble friend says that since 1893 the situation has changed. It is perfectly true that two lines of railway have been prolonged nearer to the Russian frontier than they were before, but our policy remains the same—the policy enunciated the other day by the Prime Minister in another place, that we cannot permit the extension of these railways into the territory of the Afghan nation, and so far as the position is concerned I venture to say that it is exactly the same as it has always been. My noble friend, with the experience he must have had in his recent travels, cannot fail to realise that the attitude and feelings of the Afghan nation are of a very suspicious nature.

He says that they are semi-civilised and ignorant.

LORD NEWTON: Hear, hear!

*THE MARQUESS OF BATH: But, after all, the policy of the rulers of Afghanistan has for many years been to preserve their country as an independent nation, and further, as an unmodernised one. I do not know whether that fact makes them absolutely uncivilised—I should have said that they had a civilisation of their own. I believe that if we continue the policy, which we have now pursued for many years, of cultivating friendly relations with that country, without forcing our attentions too prominently on them, we shall attain the ends we have in view, and shall have the best guarantee for peace and quiet in that portion of our Empire, which is, after all, our principal object.

My noble friend criticised the action of the Government with regard to the Mission, and was pleased to throw some ridicule upon the simultaneous despatch of the Amir's son to India. The Amir's son, it is true, is a young man, but I do not know that that is a reason for minimising the effects of his visit to India. The result, I believe, of the reception which he received at the hands of the Viceroy was to convince his father that the intentions of this country and of the Indian Government were purely amicable and friendly. I have no doubt that the result of the visit of the Sirdar was to expedite and assist the negotiations which Sir Louis Dane was carrying on at the same time at Kabul.

My noble friend asks me whether the Government of India approved of this treaty. I believe that the Indian Government expected to obtain, and perhaps rightly, larger arrangements on more points from the Amir than have been actually obtained. But, after the careful negotiations and discussions which passed between the two Governments, His Majesty's Government were satisfied, as, indeed, previous Indian Viceroy, I believe, were satisfied, that the arrangement which has now been

made was a good and sufficient one, and that decision the Government of India have accepted. My noble friend threw some doubt upon the value of this Mission if its only object was to obtain a renewal of these engagements with the late Amir. I may, perhaps, be permitted to remind him that the methods of diplomacy in Central Asia do not exactly correspond with the established practice among European Powers, and it was felt that it was judicious and advisable to obtain a solemn and formal renewal and ratification of the arrangements made with the late Amir in 1893, so that his successor should be not merely bound by the fact of his succession, but also by his personal undertaking.

I venture to point out that there is another advantage accruing from the despatch of this Mission and from the renewal or ratification of the treaty formerly made with Amir Abdur Rahman. By this solemn renewal the Afghan nation and the border tribes are publicly and formally assured that, although the personality of the Afghan ruler has changed, there has been no difference in the policy of the Indian Government, and that our pledge to protect the Afghan nation remains the same so long as the conditions under which that pledge was given remain unchanged. We are also enabled once more to convince the Amir of our will and our power to protect him, and of our determination to allow the interference of no foreign Power in his internal affairs while he is content to follow our advice in that respect. The Amir, as I have already said, is determined to carry on the policy of his predecessor, and he has shown the utmost willingness, as part of that policy, to accept the engagements which more than twenty years experience has shown make for rest and peace in those regions, and which, in our opinion, have fully carried out their purpose. We attach great importance to this treaty, but I doubt myself whether even greater importance is not to be attached to the friendly disposition which the Amir has evinced during the progress of our negotiations; and, after all, the grand result of this policy is the continuity of the relations, the obligations, the associations, and the good will between the two countries.

The Marquess of Bath.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON : My Lords, as I was at the head of the Government in India at the time when the arrangements of 1880 were entered into with Amir Abdur Rahman, your Lordships will, I am sure, permit me to take part in this discussion. You will not imagine that I rise for the purpose of criticising the conclusion at which His Majesty's Government have come. That conclusion is, as has been stated by the noble Lord who has just sat down, the renewal of the policy which was adopted in India in 1880. When the noble Lord who opened this discussion speaks as if the Government had effected nothing in getting the present Amir to agree to a treaty confirming the arrangements made with his father I think he overlooks the fact that those arrangements were strictly personal to Amir Abdur Rahman. Upon his death they ceased altogether to have effect. We were no longer bound by them. The new ruler, Amir Habibulla, was not bound by them; and it is not a small success to have induced the Amir to re-enter into those arrangements with us into which his father before him had entered. Those arrangements are set out plainly, I think, in the document which embodied the Agreement of 1880.

It is not altogether surprising that the noble Lord or others may find it not very easy to follow the meaning of the new treaty, because it is couched in Oriental phraseology to a much greater extent than any similar document that I, at this moment, recollect; but I do not think there can be any doubt as to the meaning of the treaty, which is all with which we need concern ourselves, and that it does mean that the present Amir binds himself on his part and we bind ourselves on our part to be guided in our mutual relations by the arrangements made in 1880 and in 1893. It seems to me that that is the true position which we ought to hold. The noble Lord who opened the debate is very anxious—at least so I understood him, though perhaps some of his language about the Afghans was not quite so considerate as it might have been—that we should be upon the best terms and maintain close and intimate friendship with the present Amir. The best way

of doing that is not to follow the advice of the noble Lord, and interfere with the internal affairs of Afghanistan, but to enter, as His Majesty's Government, as I understand it, have entered, into a clear understanding with the Amir that we do not admit the right of any foreign Power to interfere in Afghanistan, and that, if he should be attacked by any foreign Power, or should get into any quarrel with any foreign Power, we should be prepared to help him so long as he was guided in his management of foreign affairs by our advice. These were the operative conditions of the arrangement of 1880, and they are repeated in the present treaty. I believe they are the most solid foundation of friendship with the Afghan nation, and I believe that that friendship will always be of great value to this country.

The noble Lord called the Afghan State a protected State. If he used the word in the technical sense in which it would be used in India, I do not think it is a protected State; it is an allied State under our direct influence, but I do not think it is correct to call it a protected State. The noble Lord desires to see railways made by us in Afghanistan, to see the old and fatal experiment of having an European British Resident at Kabul, and to see British officers sent to drill the Afghan troops. All those things we know, by long and bitter experience, are resented by the Afghan people; and I have long held, and hold now, that to attempt a policy of that description would be, not to make friends of the Afghan people, but to involve ourselves in great difficulties; to irritate them, to set them against us, to incline them to look elsewhere for aid, and to bring about a state of things such as that which existed in the year 1879 between the Government of India and the then ruler of Afghanistan. I think the policy of His Majesty's Government in this respect is quite right, and is founded upon sound principles.

I confess it was to me a very great relief when I learnt some time ago, from a statement by the noble Marquess the Under-Secretary of State for India, that the result of Sir Louis Dane's Mission to Kabul had been to renew with the present Amir the treaties and engagements

which had been made with his predecessor. I think it is right that the money which was held back for a time in consequence of difficulties which arose, should be paid over to the Amir, and if you are to regard him as your friend you cannot refuse him the right to have such arms as he may require, and as, indeed, we promised would be granted to him. Therefore, I have no criticism to make upon the new treaty, as I understand it. I should like some information, however, if it is convenient to give it, in regard to the question of the subsidy—namely, whether the amount of the annual subsidy remains as it was fixed, I think, by Lord Dufferin—it was increased after my time—or possibly by my noble friend opposite (the Marquess of Lansdowne, or whether it has been now further increased. The noble Lord took some objection to the Amir being described, or rather I should say describing himself, for that is what it is, as King of Afghanistan. That title is not without precedent. A treaty was made with Afghanistan as far back as 1809 in which the ruler of that country was called King of the Douranees, and we called Shah Sujah, the puppet whom we set up in 1839-40, “Your Majesty,” and, although I was a little startled myself when I saw that title, as it is not without precedent it would be unwise, I think, to refuse it now, if the Amir desires it.

There is another Question I should like to address to His Majesty’s Government—namely, is this treaty to be regarded, like the engagement which was made with the late Amir Abdur Rahman, as personal to Amir Habibulla himself? As I have said, the language of the treaty is Oriental and not quite clear to me. I hope, however, that this is the case. I think it would be unwise to go beyond that. We all know what difficult questions in respect to the succession to the throne of Afghanistan have from time to time arisen, and I do not think it would be wise, and I hope it has not been done, that we should bind ourselves any further than the life of the present Amir. The making of this engagement in itself proves that treaties of this kind can be renewed, if friendly feelings are maintained, and it is wise, therefore, that we should not be called upon prematurely to deal with

dynastic questions such as have arisen from time to time on the death of the ruler of Afghanistan. I do not ask His Majesty’s Government to give us any further information than is contained in this Paper. I have no doubt that many negotiations went on. I believe Sir Louis Dane was for a period of something like four months at Kabul, and no doubt he had many interviews with the Amir and discussed many questions with him. I do not think it would be wise, in dealing with delicate questions of this kind, to give the public such conversations as those. Dealing with Oriental potentates is a very delicate matter. Our true object is to keep friends with the ruler of Afghanistan. Do not ask him to give you that which past history shows he cannot and will not give, but place reliance in the friendship which was shown to us by the late Amir, and which, if I remember rightly, he laid down as one of the principal objects in the policy of his son.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, I agree so closely with the remarks which have just fallen from the noble Marquess opposite that it is scarcely necessary for me to prolong this debate. I add a few words to what has already been said, partly because, like the noble Marquess opposite, these questions have a peculiar and personal interest for me, and partly because he interrogated me upon one or two points as to which I desire to give him an answer. Let me say, in the first place, how entirely I differ from my noble friend Lord Newton in regarding Sir Louis Dane’s Mission to Kabul as having been, as he represented it, entirely, or almost entirely, abortive. That Mission achieved the main object with which it was sent to Kabul, that object being to induce the new Amir of Afghanistan to renew the agreements which had subsisted for so long between his predecessor and the British Government. These agreements have been renewed. They have been reaffirmed in the shape of a much more formal contract than any into which previous Amirs have entered, and that contract is, I am able to say, in reply to the noble Marquess, personal and not dynastic in its character.

The Marquess of Ripon.

The noble Marquess was, perhaps not unnaturally, a little puzzled by the phraseology of the treaty. I believe the draft was the composition of the Amir himself, and Amirs of Afghanistan are no doubt human and prefer their own drafting to the alternatives which may be submitted to them by others. But we have examined the document very carefully, and we came to the conclusion that undoubtedly it was effectual for the purpose for which it was intended, and that it did have the effect of sufficiently and completely renewing the covenants of the old agreements. My noble friend the Under-Secretary reminds me that the Persian text was that for which the Amir was responsible.

What are the essential features of those old agreements that have been re-embodied in the new agreements? You will find them in the Parliamentary Paper which lies upon the Table of your Lordships' House. You will find them first in the correspondence of 1880, then in the correspondence for which the noble Marquess when he was Viceroy was responsible, and finally in the later document, better known as the Durand Agreement, which was contracted in 1893, when I was at the head of the Government of India. All of these agreements embodied three points. In the first place, that we were not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan; in the next place that we were to assume a carefully-defined liability to come to the Amir's assistance in the eventuality of unprovoked aggression upon him; and in the third place that the foreign relations of Afghanistan were to be under our guidance and control. Now, I submit to your Lordships that these three points are the points which are really vital, and that any other points are really of minor and wholly subsidiary importance.

These old agreements may not have prevented occasional misunderstanding and controversy, but upon the whole they worked well, and they have had, at any rate, the effect for nearly twenty-five years of keeping things quiet in Afghanistan and keeping the kingdom of Afghanistan intact.

There is no doubt, as the noble Lord who began this debate told your Lordships, that the state of things that has arisen under these agreements has not been in all respects as satisfactory as we could wish. There is room for improvement, and one Governor-General of India after another has hoped that he would be able to make some improvement in it. But I do not think I shall misrepresent any who have held that high office when I say that to one and all of them the idea of forcing such improvements and reforms upon the Government of Afghanistan was wholly repugnant. I think we should all of us have preferred to be content with a less satisfactory state of things cordially accepted by the Ruler of Afghanistan, rather than attempt a much more satisfactory and completely developed arrangement forced upon him by coercion of any kind. I must say that when I listened to my noble friend's account of the kind of improvements that he would have liked to enforce if he had been given a free hand, I felt that under his administration the relations between this country and Afghanistan would have become of the most strained description.

I have often heard of the forward policy, and I think I was myself once taken to task by the noble Marquess opposite because he suspected me of having proclivities in that direction. But the forward policy of my noble friend behind me was more forward than anything I ever heard proposed by any one. I noted among the items of his programme the following:—That we should survey Afghanistan—I suppose whether the Amir liked it or not—that we should bring telegraphs into his country, that we should construct railways in Afghanistan, and that we should appoint Residents to occupy advantageous positions throughout the Amir's dominions. These may be all very desirable things, but if the Amir does not want to have railways, or telegraphs, or Residents, or surveys in his own country, we could scarcely suggest—perhaps the noble Lord would do so at the point of the bayonet—that the Amir should have these modern luxuries whether he desired to have them or not. I have had the

advantage of hearing the opinions of many men of great experience in the East, and I have always learned from them that, in dealing with Eastern potentates such as the Amir, the greatest mistake that can be made is to force the pace, and to impose upon a reluctant recipient ideas congenial to you but thoroughly uncongenial to him.

The noble Lord asked why it was necessary to send a Mission to Kabul at all if only such small results were to be looked for. I believe that in cases of this kind it is of the greatest advantage that the ruler of Afghanistan should be brought into personal contact with high British officials, and that the matter should not be dealt with merely by correspondence. When the Durand Agreement came to be negotiated, we determined to send Sir Henry Mortimer Durand to Kabul because we found that by mere letter-writing—letter-writing very often of an argumentative and controversial character—nothing could really be achieved. Then the noble Marquess asked me a Question with regard to the subsidy to the Amir. The subsidy which this Amir will receive will be the same as that received by his predecessor—the subsidy for a part of which the noble Marquess was responsible, and for a part of which I had my share of responsibility in 1893.

Before I sit down I must express the pleasure with which I heard the noble Marquess tell your Lordships that he had no desire to press us for further information as to the details of the discussions which have taken place in regard to this important question. As the noble Marquess knows, in cases of this kind the conclusion ultimately arrived at is the result of discussions in which there are three parties—the Amir himself, the Government of India and His Majesty's Government in this country. It was not likely that in a case of this kind there would be no difference of opinion. It is most important that these discussions should be as full and as frank as possible, and it would be obviously most detrimental to the public interest if every record of every communication and every conversation which

had taken place were to be given to the public. In such a case it seems to me there is only one thing you can do, which is to present to the public the outcome and the result of the discussions, and that we have done. This Paper, brief and concise as it is, shows to your Lordships and to the country what the results of these long negotiations have been, and it only remains for me to say that in the opinion of His Majesty's Government those results are satisfactory. We consider that it is fortunate that Sir Louis Dane's Mission was sent out, and that he was able to bring back a treaty renewing agreements which we regard as of the greatest importance and the lapse of which we should have considered to be a very serious misfortune.

LORD NEWTON: My Lords, it is only with the indulgence of your Lordships that I can speak again, but I think I may reasonably complain that my Question as to how we are going to carry out our obligations under this treaty remains unanswered. I understood my noble friend to say that the agreement had been approved by past Viceroys, but I did not understand that the present Viceroy approved it. I, therefore, wish to know whether my noble friend proposes to lay further correspondence on the subject.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I have already answered that Question.

LORD NEWTON: I meant the correspondence with the Indian Government.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I expressed entire agreement with the noble Marquess opposite in the view that it is not desirable that the whole of this correspondence should be laid, and we do not intend to lay it.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

EARL SPENCER: My Lords, before the House adjourns, I should like to ask the noble Marquess what will be the arrangement of business for next week, particularly as to the discussion on Monday of the Motion of the noble Duke (the Duke of Devonshire). I also hope that the Agricultural Rating Bill, which has been read a first time this evening, will not be taken next week, as there will

probably be considerable discussion on the Second Reading. I would suggest that the Bill should be taken after the holidays.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I have made an appeal to Lord Muskerry to consider whether he could not postpone his Bill (Merchant Shipping (Aliens) Bill), which stands for Second Reading on Monday, until some other occasion, because I understand that the noble Duke on the cross benches (the Duke of Devonshire) desires to bring forward the extremely important Motion with regard to the Colonial Conference which stands in his name on the Order Paper. We feel the subject of that Motion to be so important that it should be given precedence over any other business. If, therefore, Lord Muskerry would consider the propriety of postponing his Bill I think that both sides of the House would be grateful to him. The further stage of the Agricultural Rating Bill will be taken after the holidays.

LORD MUSKERRY: I am anxious to consult the wishes of your Lordships, but would suggest that I might be allowed to proceed with my Bill on Tuesday.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: There is another reason why the Bill should be postponed until a later time. The noble Marquess who presides over the Board of Trade is still too unwell to attend the House.

LORD MUSKERRY: Under these circumstances I assent to the general wish of the House to postpone the Second Reading stage of my Bill.

House adjourned at Ten minutes before Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 2nd June, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. SPEAKER, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [Lords]; Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Otley Improvement Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Rathmines and Rathgar Extension and Improvement Bill. As amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. To be read the third time upon Monday next.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill. As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That, they have agreed to—Croydon Gas Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill; Accrington Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Craster and Tralee and Fenit." [Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords.]]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under The General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Melfort and Portencross." [Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [Lords.]]

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 237.]

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 238.]

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Buteshire; and Rothesay; to lie upon the Table.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition of Royal and other Burghs of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition of Royal and other Burghs of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 AND 1888.

Copy presented, of Special Report by the Board of Trade, under Section

(1) of The Electric Lighting Act, 1888, respecting the Brentford Electric Lighting Order, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EXTRADITION ACTS, 1870 TO 1895.

Copy presented, of Order in Council of May 29th, 1905, giving effect to a Supplementary Convention with Switzerland amending Article XVIII. of the Extradition Treaty of November 26th, 1880 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.**

Promotion of Assistant Clerks in the National Education Office, Dublin.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will inquire from the Irish Government why the recommendations for the promotion of assistant clerks in the National Education Office, Dublin, made by the heads of that Department in November, 1903, have not yet been forwarded to the Treasury; and whether these recommendations will now be submitted to the Treasury, with a view to having the matter dealt with at an early date.

(Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.)
No, Sir, I cannot undertake to make such an inquiry. The Irish Government of course acts on its own responsibility in making or not making a recommendation.

Agricultural Holdings Acts.

MR. HARDY (Kent, Ashford): To ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, in view of the promises made at the time of the passing of the Agricultural Holdings Act, 1900, he can now undertake to introduce a Bill to consolidate the Agricultural Holdings Acts.

(Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowses.)
The suggestion of my hon. friend as to the advantage of a measure for the consolidation of the various legislative provisions embodied in the Agricultural Holdings Acts is one which has not been overlooked, and I am prepared to give it

favourable consideration; but I am not in a position to say that it would be possible to introduce a Bill of this nature with much prospect of success during the course of the present session.

Outbreak of Necrosis at Messrs. Moreland's Works, Gloucester.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state at what factory the case of phosphorus poisoning chronicled in the *Labour Gazette* as occurring in March, was found, and whether the case is an old one or is a new outbreak of necrosis; and what steps he proposes to take.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.) This case occurred at the factory of Messrs. Moreland and Sons, Gloucester. The person attacked was a man who had been employed some six or seven years at a mechanical dipping machine in a well-ventilated room. The attack was the first attack and mild in character. The investigations made show

that the man had been in the habit of chewing tobacco while at work, and had recently received a blow on the jaw which had caused a tooth to come out. The man is now employed by the firm elsewhere. Stringent special rules are in force in this factory. I shall take care that those rules are not transgressed, but in the circumstances of this particular case I do not think that any action on my part is called for.

Provision of New Schools in the County of London.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education how many notices to provide new schools, under Section 8 of the Act of 1902, have been given in the county of London; who have given the notices, if any; and what is the denomination and accommodation of the schools proposed in such notices, if any.

(Answered by Sir William Anson.) Notices have been given in the following seven cases (six council and one voluntary):—

Date of Notice.	Name of School.	Proposed accommodation.	Notice given by—
14th November, 1904	Chelsea, Hortensia Road, Council	300	London County Council.
14th November, 1904	Paddington, Westbourne Green, Council	800	London County Council.
14th November, 1904	Islington, New North Road, Council	900	London County Council.
14th November, 1904	Lambeth, Coldharbour Lane, Council	300	London County Council.
14th November, 1904	St. Pancras, Dartmouth Park, Council	800	London County Council.
8th March, 1905	Stepney, Whitechapel, Burton Street, Council	800	London County Council.
3rd March, 1905	Kensington, St. Charles Square, Roman Catholic	200	Madame O'Flaherty and others.

Total accommodation of proposed council schools - - - 3,900
Total accommodation of proposed voluntary schools - - - 200

Highworth Rural District Council and Stratton St. Margaret's Sewage Scheme.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the report of the inquiry held by one of the Local Government Board's inspectors at Stratton St. Margaret's, in Wiltshire, in reference to an application for a loan to meet excess expenditure for a sewage scheme, and to the conduct of the engineers employed by the Highworth Rural District Council, as disclosed in that report; and whether he can take any steps to protect local authorities from similar proceedings on the part of engineers in other cases.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) The report to which the noble Lord refers is, no doubt, that which was published in the *'Sanitary Record'* of March 30th and April 6th last. I have since received the report made to the Local Government Board by the inspector who held the inquiry. I do not think that there are many firms employed by local authorities who would have taken the course which appears to have been adopted by the firm referred to in the Question. Possibly the publicity given to the present case may be a sufficient protection to local authorities against similar practices.

Names of Revising Barristers for Irish Constituencies.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the names of the barristers appointed last year to preside at revision sessions in the different Irish constituencies.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The names of the assistant revising barristers for 1904, and the counties and boroughs for which they were appointed, were published in the *Dublin Gazette* of August 23rd and September 9th, 1904. Each appointment is made for a particular county or borough, and not for a Parliamentary Division.

Increase of Salary for Mr. Patrick Coyle, of Kildarragh National School.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-

Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education have now considered the claim of Mr. Patrick Coyle, of Kildarragh National School, Cashelmore, county Donegal, for an increase of salary, in accordance with an undertaking given last year; and whether they are now prepared to advance Mr. Coyle to second grade.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) This case is at present under consideration by the Commissioners. The result will be communicated to the manager of the school at an early date.

Amalgamation of Boys' and Girls' Schools in Ireland.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say why it is that amalgamation of boys and girls shall not be enforced by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland unless the average attendance in each school is under thirty, while in the case of new schools to be erected the building grant will not be given by the Commissioners unless the manager consents to have the schools amalgamated where the average attendance is under fifty; and whether he will recommend the Commissioners not to enforce amalgamation in both cases unless the average attendance be under fifty.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) A second teacher is not employed at schools with an average attendance of less than fifty pupils. The Commissioners consider that schools which have but one teacher are necessarily inefficient, and therefore they decline to make building grants for new separate schools for boys and girls unless there will be an attendance sufficient for the employment of a second teacher at each school. But, in the case of existing separate schools for boys and girls, they do not think it desirable to insist on amalgamation unless the average at either school falls below thirty. The last inquiry in this Question seems to be based on a misapprehension. The Commissioners do not enforce amalgamation in any case unless the average attendance is under fifty.

INDIAN FINANCE.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) said he hoped the Indian Motion would not be persisted in. It was not on the Paper, and naturally many hon. Members would resent its being smuggled through the House. It was, moreover, a private Members' day; and there was no necessity why Government business should be taken.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Welling-ton) said that a full opportunity for discussing the matter would arise. It was of great importance to India; and it would be an advantage to the House that the present stage should be taken before the discussion on the Indian Budget.

Objection being taken, the Motion was postponed.

PLURAL VOTING BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. SOAMES (Norfolk, S.) said that everyone who had paid even a superficial attention to the present electoral system would agree that it was full of anomalies of the very gravest character. The House had been informed that the Government proposed to deal with redistribution; but that was not one of the most serious or important of the anomalies of the system. Further, it could not be dealt with without meeting with great complexity, considerable disturbance throughout the country, a delay of two sessions, and very great expense. His aim was to accomplish a reform still more important, which could be carried out without any expense or disturbance and without any elaborate machinery.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.) moved a count.

House counted and Forty Members being found present,

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MR. SOAMES, resuming, said that the principle of the Bill had not been discussed in Parliament for many years; and it was quite time that the House of Commons should have an opportunity of giving a decision on the subject. The object of the measure was to remove or largely modify the inequality in voting power which at present existed between different classes of the community. Probably not one artisan or labourer in the country possessed more than one vote; and, even if he did, he would not be able to cast more than one. On the other hand, there was probably not a wealthy man in the country who did not possess at least two votes—often-times many more. There was a gentleman in Oxford who used to boast that he had twenty seven votes. To his mind, that was not just or fair. It should be remembered that this additional voting power was not given to greater culture or intelligence. It was given to one form of wealth only. Even in the Universities many Bachelors of Arts who had passed with distinction might not find it convenient to put down £40, as in the case of Cambridge, and he believed the amount was similar in Oxford. On the other hand, a man with more money and less brains, who had been pushed through a pass examination by experienced crammers, had only to write a cheque in order to become a voter at once. The system did not mean additional representation to superior culture; but merely additional voting power to wealth. Some people no doubt maintained that the possession of wealth should entitle the possessor to a larger share in political power than his less fortunate neighbours. Those who maintained that doctrine could not logically support the present system. Hon. Members opposite should introduce a sliding scale. For instance, a man with £25,000 should only have two votes, a man with £50,000 three votes, a man with £75,000 four votes, and so on up to the millionaire with forty votes or more. It was possible to conceive a case where a man with £25,000 might have twenty-five votes, whereas a millionaire would have only one.

The argument which would probably be adduced in favour of the present

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system was what he might call "the stake in the country" argument—that the possessor of wealth had a greater stake in the country than the poor man, and should, therefore, have more voting power. He entirely denied the premise. To his mind, the rich man had no greater stake in the country than the poor man. The test of a man's stake in the country was what he stood to lose by ill-considered legislation. It was impossible to conceive any legislation being passed which would ruin a man of wealth. He might be docked of one or two luxuries, such as not keeping up as large a racing stud as he had, or a certain number of motor-cars. In his opinion, the man who had most to lose by, for instance, a gamble in food was the poor man, whose very subsistence and that of his children might be endangered. Therefore, the working man should have an equal voting power to that possessed by the man of means. It might be contended that the wealthier classes were better educated; and, therefore, better able to form a judgment in political questions; but history showed that the political judgment of the masses was at least as sound as that of the classes. Every great reform had been suggested by the labouring classes, rather than by the wealthy classes. Therefore, there was no reason why one class should have a larger voting power than the other. Under the present system, it was possible that a representative might be returned who did not represent the views of the majority of the electorate in the constituency. In many constituencies the majority was very narrow. Taking an average in the county constituencies in Great Britain with 10,000 votes or thereabouts, the property voters numbered 1,650, the majority of whom were non-resident.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked what were the exact figures of the non-residents.

MR. SOAMES said he could not give the exact figures.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY asked why the hon. Gentleman stated that a large

Mr. Soames.

proportion of the voters were non-resident.

MR. SOAMES said it was a matter of general knowledge. Even if only a third were non-resident, they could easily turn the scale in the case of a narrow majority. That was, in his opinion, indefensible.

The proposals he advanced were simple. It was not proposed to remove names from the register; that would be difficult, if not impossible. The Bill declared that it should be an offence to vote more than once at a general election, the penalty being seven years disfranchisement and a fine not exceeding £100. It was a very moderate measure. The Bill did not remove any legitimate influence which men of means and intelligence must and always would possess among the electors; it would only remove the artificial and illegitimate influence given to some person not necessarily the wisest. It contained no machinery for preventing plural voting, the result of which would be that if this Bill was passed a man would vote in more than one division at his own risk. No doubt the political agents on both sides would keep a sharp lookout for men voting in more than one place, and he would therefore run a very great risk of detection. But if the Government thought that that was a defect in the Bill he would be very glad in Committee to accept a clause to provide machinery, and could himself frame such a clause which would have that object. His object to-day was to make the Bill as simple as possible, so as to get a discussion on the principle. He submitted that the Bill would, if passed, go far to do away with a great anomaly in our electoral system, and that it would do it without delay, disturbance, or expense. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) said the Bill itself was very simple, the proposal being to give effect to the cry of one man one vote. As he understood it,

that rather ancient Radical formula was based on the principle that every citizen had a natural or political right to a vote which was independent of property or residential qualification. This Bill, while it penalised the exercise of a plural vote resulting from a property or occupation qualification, did not disturb the two ancient franchises which were based on property and residential qualification. That was, he submitted, legislation of a very strange character which would tend to great anomalies. Take the case of a borough where a general election had recently been held, and where a by-election took place, the constituency voting at the subsequent by-election would be entirely different to that which took part in the election of Members at the general election, because this Bill did not affect by-elections. Again, in the case of University representation, University constituencies might be good or bad, but they ought not to be altered, quite incidentally as it were, by a Bill of this kind. What would happen in the case of a general election? There could be no doubt that the great bulk of the non-resident electors would vote in the constituencies in which they lived and not in the University constituencies, with the result that votes recorded in the University constituency would be almost wholly those of the resident electors. That might be a desirable change, but such a change ought not to be arrived at incidentally, and without proper consideration.

The hon. Gentleman argued as if there were two classes of electors in this country—the resident elector who spent his time in his constituency and the non-resident elector who had some spurious right to vote because he happened to hold property in the division, but who knew nothing about the division and merely came there to record his vote. But hon. Members knew perfectly well that there were many electors, not merely freeholders, but electors who had residences in more than one constituency. Let them take the case of a Yorkshire or Lancashire manufacturer who had his business, where he employed a large amount of labour, in one division and who was interested in all the good works of that division, but who had his home in

another division, where he again took great interest in the local life; or let them take the case of a barrister whose professional life was passed in London, in which he took great interest, but whose ancestral home was in the country, where he was also greatly interested in local affairs. Would it not be intolerable to say in those cases that those gentlemen should only exercise their franchise in one division. It would be most unjust; and to suppose that their exercise of their franchise in both places would in any sense cause a grievance to their neighbours was to suppose that which was not the fact. If they deprived a man of the right to give a vote in two places in which he had separate but real and substantial interests they would not only do him grave injustice, but they would also do an injustice to the divisions in which he had the plural interests. All the conditions and machinery of modern life had made that kind of dual life more easy and more useful than it was in other years, and therefore it might be said with regard to this, as with regard to many other ancient Radical shibboleths, that the repeaters of them were living in an ancient world and taking no account of the movement of the times.

To pass this Bill would be to inflict an individual wrong on many of the electors. What public good could be served? If he thought the continuance of plural voting was really detrimental to the interests of the poor, he should pause before he voted against this Bill. But nobody could suppose that it inflicted any damage on the claims of labour. He had no fear whatever that the interests of the working man could ever be prejudiced by a plural vote. Nor did he believe that in the long run the votes of such people as he had been alluding to were likely to be cast entirely on one side. He attached particular importance to plural voters as a class, because on the whole they gave a certain amount of stability to our representative system. He did not believe that any great danger could come to the State from any violent wave of democratic feeling. Danger was more likely to spring from the keenness of Party feeling, and the power of the Party machinery. In

his judgment the continuance of a body of voters such as he had indicated was wholesome, because on the whole they were less liable to be swept away by waves of artificial Party feeling, and were more likely to give their votes according to fixed principles than mere temporary impulses of Party passion. He submitted that the Bill would inflict injustice on individual capable voters, that it would be inexpedient in the interests of the community that plural voting should be penalised, and that the method now proposed for effecting this result was illogical, capricious, and almost casual, and therefore he begged to move the Motion standing in his name.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge) thought that, as this simple-looking Bill of eleven lines embodied nothing more or less than a radical alteration of the franchise, it was rather ridiculous that hon. Members should expect the House to pass it at that stage of the session, or to imagine that the matter could be dealt with in such a piecemeal fashion. He was surprised that hon. Members opposite should wish to tinker with the franchise at all, because twenty-one years ago they passed what they declared was a final measure dealing with the franchise. ["No."] Sir G. Trevelyan, speaking on the Franchise Bill in 1885, said—

"It is neither a limiting nor a half-and-half measure. If it is passed I expect no man living will be troubled with the franchise again. It admits those who should be admitted, and it excludes all who should be excluded."

It could not be said that that statement was made in inadvertence, because the matter was fully discussed in the year 1884, when the then Prime Minister refused to include the question of one man one vote in the Act of that year. The question was soon raised again, however, doubtless because the Party opposite thought that when the franchise was lowered they were going to ride in prosperity on the votes of the electors and enjoy office almost continuously. But they had found out their mistake. In the twenty-one years that had elapsed they had been in office only three or four years. Having failed to secure the support of the electors under the scheme

of 1885, they now wished for another alteration of the system. But hon. Members who professed to desire a perfect system whereby the absolute voice of the democracy could be heard, merely picked out one little anomaly out of many anomalies, the redress of which they thought would be to the advantage of their Party, leaving all the other anomalies with their glaring absurdity. Why was this one point selected? Was it a greater grievance than the fact that the country was so divided into constituencies that the true voice of the people could not be heard, or some of the grievances connected with the registration laws, or the absurd system of making special provisions for illiterate voters? Surely after thirty-five years of compulsory education it was high time to cease placing a premium on illiteracy.

What did this alleged grievance really consist of? When the question was last discussed in Parliament it was shown that about 73,000 people could vote in more than one constituency at a general election. Would anyone pretend that so small a number made much difference either way? The question had been greatly exaggerated. A Return prepared in 1890 showed that the number of registered property owners was 586,000, but it was subsequently pointed out that owners who were also occupiers were registered as owners and not as occupiers. In the great majority of cases owners held property only in one constituency, and although they were registered as owners they were not plural voters. Out of the 586,000 registered owners no less than 400,000 were resident occupiers, but not plural voters. It was proved conclusively that the grievance reduced itself to this—that some 73,000 people could vote in more than one constituency. Was that grievance at all comparable with the inequalities which followed from the want of redistribution. The principle which underlay the question of the franchise was that taxation and representation should go together. Mr. Disraeli emphatically laid down the principle that the franchise must be based on rating; in other words, that anybody who contributed to local taxation in two places should be entitled to vote in both places. That right could

not be taken away without fundamentally altering the principle on which the franchise was based. There were very few people who were able to vote in a large number of places. He knew a man who might be described as a vote collector; just as other people collected pictures, or butterflies, this man collected votes in as many different parts of the country as he could, until he possessed about forty; but he was finally defeated by elections being held in Cornwall and Aberdeen on the same day. Why, on account of a few foolish people of that kind, should there be taken away from able and successful men of business the right to vote in two places, in both of which they had large interests and contributed to the support of the country? Hon. Members opposite wished working men to have fair representation. That could not be secured without equal electoral districts. The idea of democracy might be very fine, but democracy tempered by a system which gave one vote equally to places with 40,000 and 2,000 electors respectively was absurd and anomalous. [OPPOSITION cheers.] Hon. Gentlemen opposite cheered, but were they prepared to give London its fair representation as compared with Ireland?

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) asked whether the hon. Member was in order in discussing the larger question of redistribution on this Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said the subject was a very large one, but the questions of redistribution and one man one vote had always gone together in argument.

MR. HEMPHILL: Then we will be at liberty to go into the question.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN reminded the hon. Member that the mover of the Bill distinctly went into the question of redistribution. London, although its population was greater, had sixty-two Members against Ireland's 103. Were hon. Members prepared to take from Ireland a sufficient number of representatives to make the respective representation equal?

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhondda): Is the hon. Member prepared to break the Act of Union?

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said it would be out of order to discuss the Act of Union, but it was distinctly broken by the disestablishment of the Irish Church, and if this House was free to break it then it was free to break it now to equalise the representation. For instance, Newry had 1,900 voters, and Dartford 19,000. Why should Newry have ten times the voting power of Dartford?

MR. HEMPHILL rose again to a point of order. In the absence of practically every Irish representative the hon. Member was proceeding to discuss on a Friday afternoon a most vital question which might involve a revolution in Ireland.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said that many revolutionary proposals had been made on Friday afternoons. He did not think the remarks of the hon. Member were irrelevant or that he was going farther than he was entitled to go. His arguments could be replied to. The two subjects had been generally treated together of late years.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said that so far from wishing to bring about a revolution in Ireland in the absence of the Irish Members, he was trying to save them from hon. Members opposite, because if this Bill were carried it would follow, as a matter of logical necessity, that Irish representation must be reduced. Another instance showing the greater need for redistribution than the proposal of this Bill was afforded by Romford with 41,000 voters and Durham with 2,000, each having one representative. The real voice of the working classes was far more likely to be heard in this House if the working men of Romford were given an equal voting power with the working men of Durham than by merely preventing 73,000 people who paid rates in more than one place from exercising the privilege they had always enjoyed of voting in each place in which they were registered. There was no need whatever for this

Bill. The whole question of the representation of the people must be dealt with on a broad and comprehensive basis. The worst feature of the present Bill was that it deliberately picked out one anomaly, the removal of which hon. Members opposite thought would bring them Parliamentary advantage. He protested against such a piecemeal and partisan way of dealing with a great question, and had pleasure in seconding the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon, this day six months.'"—(*Mr. Whitmore.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden) said the promoters had not put forward this Bill as an indication of the whole of their view, but really as a compromise to enable the House to decide the great principle that all electors should be placed on an equal footing. The objections raised to the Bill resolved themselves into the old cry of "Property, property, property." Whenever hon. Members opposite were brought face to face with a question of this kind they referred to the necessity of property being represented. Liberals, on the other hand, believed in intelligence and individuals being represented. The poor man had a right to have an equal voice with the rich man in the affairs of the nation, and that was why they supported this Bill. The hon. Member for Tunbridge had referred to Sir George Trevelyan's statement that the Bill of 1885 was a final settlement. The Bill of 1885 was a Franchise Bill. It was not now proposed to alter the franchise; the present Bill was not a Franchise Bill.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: It is a "Disfranchise" Bill.

MR. J. A. PEASE said there was all the difference between a Franchise and a "Disfranchise" Bill. If a Franchise Bill proved to be unjust in a large number of cases, surely the House was not to be precluded by a statement made twenty years ago from remedying the injustice. The hon. Member had attributed motives

to them. He thought it was undesirable that such insinuations should be cast across the floor of the House. Their motive in regard to this Bill was not one to gain a Party advantage. They desired to secure equal justice for all classes in the country, and many of them were in favour of one vote one value just as hon. Gentlemen opposite were. They wanted a redistribution scheme dealing with the whole subject so that everyone should be made by the State as equal as possible. In the constituency of Tyneside, which he formerly represented, there were 18,000 electors, and about 3,500 of them were resident in the city of Newcastle or the borough of Tynemouth. These 3,500 electors, because they happened to hold property in Newcastle or Tynemouth, having voted at election times in Newcastle, went into the country districts and voted down the prevailing view there. Over and over again the question in Tyneside had been whether the resident population in the division proper would be able to secure the return of the candidate of their choice. The present Member for Tyneside would be the first to acknowledge that he obtained his return to the House by securing a large proportion of the ownership vote in the city of Newcastle and borough of Tynemouth, although they had nothing to do with the Tyneside Division. It was a great hardship to the electors of the Tyneside constituency that they were deprived of the representative of their choice. In Newcastle also a large number of property owners happened to possess sites in Jesmond Cemetery, and that fact actually enabled them to exercise a vote in the county division outside the city of Newcastle. He gave another case where a firm of brewers (which had not been converted into a limited company)—he believed there were about eight in the firm—owned a large number of tied houses, and they went all round the country and each exercised his vote in connection with the property qualifications for these public houses, although they had residential and other qualifications in their private capacity. The system which allowed an injustice of that kind was bad, and, although they did not for a moment consider that this Bill dealt with all the grievances, they thought this was a real

Mr. Griffith Boscawen.

grievance and one which ought to be settled by Parliament.

*MR. DUKE (Plymouth) said he approached this Bill quite apart from any Party considerations. The hon. Member opposite no doubt had called attention to anomalies which it would be very desirable to remove. He stated that there were in this country a great number of spurious voters. Nobody doubted that statement and if this Bill were adopted it would abolish spurious voters, or at any rate prevent them from giving full effect to their spurious qualifications. At a general election the spurious voters' powers would be taken away: at a by-election the spurious voter would be in full force. His vote would come into existence for that occasion only. But while the hon. Member had struck at an incidental defect in the present system, for the purpose of cutting out the defect he was ready to destroy one of the most vital elements of the system. Anybody who had considered the nature of the electoral qualifications of this country knew that from the time when the franchise began the property qualification had been recognised as an essential feature. They had at the earliest times the freehold vote in counties where property was the sole qualification, and in boroughs they had a franchise where occupation was the sole qualification. From the earliest times it did not seem to have been recognised as a proper restriction upon the property qualification that a man exercising it should be resident in the constituency in which he voted.

Hon. Members were no doubt familiar with the speech of Mr. Gladstone on the Franchise Bill of 1884. Mr. Gladstone considered this matter most closely on the matter of principle; with regard to the property qualification he accepted it as an essential and integral part of the constitutional system of the country, and in discussing the topic of the necessity of residence, Mr. Gladstone said it never had been, as far as he could ascertain, a condition of the exercise of the property qualification that the voter should be resident, and he did not propose that that should be a condition of the exercise of that qualification. But the

hon. Member opposite took a more daring view of this subject than Mr. Gladstone, who at any rate recognised the nature of the constitutional system under which they lived, and the checks and counter checks which gave them something like security in Parliamentary representation. Although Mr. Gladstone was introducing a large democratic franchise, he was not ready to adopt the course which the hon. Member had suggested, and he paid the tribute to the character of our representative system that it had embodied in it from the earliest times a recognition of the position that the possession of a certain amount of property gave the owner a right to vote for the Member representing the constituency in which the property was situated. That was not a modern opinion, and they had proved by the experience of centuries that it was a principle in their representative system which had produced good effects. It no doubt had faults such as the hon. Member opposite had exposed, and such as any lover of a representative system would like to see removed; but in the effort to remove those blemishes the hon. Member and those who supported him were apparently ready to destroy one of the vital principles of the system. He hoped some other means would be found of removing the blemishes which existed. In the Bill of 1884 Mr. Gladstone cut away a good many abuses, and anyone who read the debates upon that measure would find that on both sides of the House there was a readiness to remove those abuses. It seemed to be, however, the deliberate intention of the proposer of this Bill to eliminate from the constitutional system the part which the ownership of property had played in it for centuries. And yet by the terms of the Bill the condemned voters were to exercise the franchise at by-elections. He thought this was an unsatisfactory method of dealing with a great question.

It had been said that at a general election there were people who would scour the country in their political enthusiasm to vote. The great difficulty he had experienced was that electors would not vote at all. The enthusiastic voter who was ready to vote twice if he

had the right had a refreshing degree of interest for him. There were many men with the dual qualification who, if deprived of a vote where they held property, would be greatly missed from the political life of that county. Many of them were among the foremost in public life. Why should any man who held a conspicuous position, and who had particular qualifications for exercising political influence, be prohibited from using the franchise which came from property qualification? To forbid such men from voting would be to strike out from the influences of political life in the counties an influence which hon. Members opposite, or at least many of them, did not desire to see divorced from political life. Why was it proposed to be done? It was because some hon. Members seemed to think that the balance of politics was apt to be warped a little on one side or the other at a particular election. If they selected a jury of almost any twelve men, probably the same result would be got on a particular issue as from any other jury. He believed also that one body of voters, called to decide upon a given issue, were very likely to give the same result as another body of voters. He did not desire to defend the anomalies to which reference had been made. He wished they could be got rid of. But the people who owned freeholds were not immune from the influences which affected other classes of voters, and he did not think that either political Party had a proprietary interest in them. On one occasion there might be a majority one way, and on another occasion there might be a majority the other way. The hon. Member who had brought in the Bill arrived at a perfect representative system, but Mr. Gladstone said in discussing this very question in 1884 that those Members on his own side of the House who sought to induce the Government to invent a perfect system and embody such a system in a Bill were tempting them on the road to ruin.

Mr. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) said it appeared to him that the arguments brought forward on the other side did not show that they had a very formidable case. None of the hon. Members who had yet spoken had dealt

in a directly hostile way with the principle advocated by the promoters of the Bill. The hon. Member for Tunbridge had chiefly criticised this Bill because it was piecemeal. Hon. Members on the Opposition side would be very glad to remember that opinion a few weeks hence, when the Government brought in their piecemeal Resolutions with regard to redistribution. The supporters of the Bill before the House did not think it covered the whole ground or that it would create the democratic system which they wished to see. The last Liberal Government showed its anxiety to deal with redistribution, and the bulk of the Opposition wished to have payment of Members. He thought also that most of them were probably willing to deal with the question of illiteracy. What they wished to assert that day was that plural voting was one of the worst anomalies, and that it was worth while to abolish a system which in many constituencies over-rode the views of the local voters by absentee voters coming in who had nothing to do with the constituency. He was glad the hon. Member for Chelsea agreed with him in principle, at any rate, for he stated that those who had no interest in a constituency should not vote there.

It was very difficult to say how many such voters there were, for there were no exact figures obtainable. But in the county divisions of Middlesex there were between 3,000 and 6,000 voters in each of those divisions who never lived in those districts, and who never came near the districts. He instanced the cases of Hornsey, Harrow, and Ealing as districts where voters came down and swamped the resident voters. He, personally, had nothing to complain of in this matter, for in his constituency there were 1,300 voters from Halifax, and it was generally believed that a majority of them were his supporters. But these 1,300 men had nothing actively to do with his constituency, and almost all of them had votes in Halifax as well. It was impossible to say how many men had double votes, but the figure given by the hon. Member for Tunbridge seemed ridiculous. He did not think the hon. Member maintained that it was correct. It was ridiculous to say

that there were only 73,000 electors who had more than one vote.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN said that on the last occasion when this question was debated a member of the Government stated that number categorically, and it was not denied then. Since then there had probably been an increase.

MR. TREVELYAN replied that the figure appeared to be ridiculous. If the proportion of voters who came into other constituencies from the outside was about the same as in his own constituency, the total number in the country must be much greater than was stated. They ought to adopt the principle of one man one vote. He did not believe in the doctrine of the dual life put forward by the hon. Member for Chelsea. It was a question between man and man, and not between wealth and wealth. On the Opposition side of the House they were not surprised that they had not yet got a complete democratic system, or that Mr. Gladstone would not adopt the principle which they were now advocating. It was due, however, to Mr. Gladstone that our democratic system had been created. Mr. Gladstone began in an aristocratic England, and he could not rush the country into a new democratic system. When the present franchise was established reasonable statesmen found that these reforms could not be carried at once. They found the property vote too much fortified by tradition to be abolished at once. They could not do everything at one blow, least of all in a country like this. He and his friends maintained, however, that, in order to arrive at the perfect democracy, which they had now a right to ask for, the only system upon which they could go in the long run was that one good citizen was as good as another. They all had grievances, whether rich or poor, and if extra votes were to be allowed at all—and they did not ask that—the poor should have the extra votes. This was only one of the steps in the direction in which they wished to go.

MR. BOND (Nottingham, E.) said that a good deal had been said on both

sides of the House about the anomalies of the existing system. He denied that there was any anomaly at all. They must look at the matter from the point of view of constitutional theory and practice. The endeavour to secure absolute equality of value for every vote cast in this country must of necessity break down, unless they were to bring in some system of proportional representation. Although proportional representation had its advocates in the House, it had never yet succeeded in captivating the imagination of the country at large, nor had it ever been taken up by a responsible statesman. The little alterations in the law suggested by the other side did not go any appreciable distance towards bringing about a perfect system. It must be seen that in the system which had grown up in the course of our constitutional history, value had always been attached to places and districts rather than to the establishment of an exact proportion between the number of voters in a given district and the representation to which those voters were entitled. While they might to some extent try and distribute representatives more or less in proportion to population, they still had to maintain as their most vital and most effective principle, the principle that a given locality for one reason or the other had to be represented, even though the population of the place was very much less than the population of other places which had only a smaller number of representatives. The principle that a man should have one vote in London because his business was there and kept him there for a part of the year, and another vote in the country, where he resided during another part of the year, was entirely consistent with the present theory of our Constitution. As long as we had an anomalous Constitution—and our Constitution was an anomaly—he thought we should preserve the historic symmetry of that anomalous Constitution. If they began to pull out here and pull out there they might be quite sure that they would create anomalies worse than those they were endeavouring to abolish.

*MR. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said that the empty benches on each side of the House had shown that it was hardly

to be expected that the House should treat this Bill seriously. The Bill was introduced to alter our political Constitution. If the Opposition were serious in regard to this matter, the Bill ought to have been introduced by the Leader of the Opposition, with other responsible leaders on that side of the House as backers. But here, on a private Members' day, was a Bill presented and backed by a number of hon. Gentlemen whose Parliamentary record he had taken the trouble to look up. Of course, he recognised that every Member of the House had an equal right to bring in a Bill; yet they ought to have had on the back of this Bill the names of the leaders of the Opposition. Nine gentleman backed the Bill. Two of them came into the House in 1903, two in 1902, one in 1904, and the remainder of them a little earlier. Those hon. Gentlemen, with their limited experience of the rules of the House and the Constitution of the country, instead of sitting, as they naturally ought to do, listening for two or three years to acquire a knowledge of Parliamentary procedure, were anxious to secure a perfect democracy. What was a perfect democracy? It was, according to the hon. Gentleman opposite, to give the poor man more power than the rich man.

MR. TREVELYAN: I never said that.

*MR. RENWICK said that he did think that that was what they were led to expect from the remarks of the hon. Gentleman. He would point out to the House that they, on that side of the House, did not fear any lowering of the franchise. What had happened since the franchise was lowered? From 1832 to 1867—a period of thirty-five years—when the franchise was lowered in boroughs, the Liberals were in power for twenty-six years and the Tories only for nine years. It was almost hopeless during that period for a Tory to attempt to get into the House. Then in 1867, when the Tory Party granted the household franchise in boroughs, a change came over the scene. From 1867 to 1885—a period of eighteen years—the Liberals were in power for ten and a-half years, and the Tories for seven and a-half

years. In 1885, when the county franchise was lowered, the same tendency was observed. From 1885 to 1905—a period of twenty years—the Liberals had been in power for only three and a-half years, while the Tories had been in office sixteen and a-half years. Therefore the Tory Party did not fear any further lowering of the franchise. They got their power in the great cities and boroughs of the country. This Bill did not affect the voting in these particular constituencies. Where did his friends opposite get their power? Not in such great cities as London, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Newcastle, where intelligent working men had done with the Radicals and invariably returned Unionists by very large majorities. Did hon. Gentlemen opposite wish to bring in this Bill to return a few more Radical Members from the county constituencies? They told the House that they were going to sweep the country. Why, then, seek more power to do so? Even if hon. Gentlemen opposite thought they were going to sweep the country at the next election it would be necessary to have an Opposition, and therefore it would be well to keep the franchise as it was at the present time.

Was this a serious Bill? It was intended to prevent plural voting at Parliamentary elections, but it would do nothing of the sort. He would point out that the measure only proposed to prevent plural voting at general elections and did not apply to by-elections at all. The Bill was ill-considered and badly drafted, and he ventured to say that the House would not be so foolish as to pass it. At present there were great anomalies in our electoral system. In Newcastle, the great city he represented, there were 36,000 voters, and yet for this huge commercial centre there were only two Members sent to Parliament, while Kilkenny in Ireland, with only 1,500 or 1,600 voters, returned a Member. That was one of the greatest anomalies possible, and yet they were told this Bill would remove anomalies.

This Bill simply tinkered with the constitution. The subject could not be dealt with by private Members, it must be dealt with as a whole

Mr. Renwick.

by the Government. Hon. Members opposite said the Government had no mandate to pass certain measures. Certainly no mandate was given to Liberals at the last general election to pass such a measure as this. The foundation of this measure came from Newcastle, he believed. It was part of the Newcastle Programme in 1892. They all knew how hon. Members opposite had dropped that programme. Recently the Leader of the Opposition delivered a speech in Newcastle, and said how much he admired that programme, and how he wished he could carry it—but how little of it had been carried out. The Leader of the Opposition did not, however, put forward that Newcastle Programme as the Liberal programme for the next general election. Hon. Members opposite wished to do something to keep alive that unfortunate programme against the wishes of the leaders of their Party, and they had their opportunity in this ill-adjusted measure. He wanted an emphatic answer as to why the Liberal Party did not deal with this question in 1895 when they had an opportunity. They were now saying that if they were returned to power they would do this thing and that—so many things indeed that to carry out half of them would require that the House should sit from January to December.

Hon. Members opposite had said that it was more important to give power to poor men than to rich men. It was well known how strong their feeling was against property. He would like to point out how many great undertakings in his own constituency, employing thousands of workmen, and paying many hundreds of pounds in rates and taxes, had no representation at Parliamentary and municipal elections. Owing to the circulation of newspapers and other causes of enlightenment, the artisans in the great cities were becoming Unionists. He ventured to say that without the campaign of calumny and misrepresentation which were carried on at by-elections, and at no place more so than in the Whitby Division—he had been at Whitby during the contest—

MR. DEPUTY - SPEAKER : Order, order ! I think the hon. Member is getting rather far away from the subject.

*MR. RENWICK said that there was not the slightest necessity for the abolition of the qualification we had at present. If, however, this matter were brought in as a part of a great scheme and commended itself to Parliament as a whole, and not introduced by private Members without the support of a single responsible Opposition leader, they on the Government side of the House had no fear whatever of a further reduction of the franchise.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON said that his hon. friend who had previously spoken had quoted interesting figures to show that they as a Party were not afraid of the lowering or extension of the franchise. That was not the reason of their hostility to the Bill. He asked the House to take note of the fact that when the working classes of England obtained the franchise in anything like full numbers they gave their confidence entirely to the Party now in power. The Bill was introduced in a single speech ; which, although in order, was unusual in the case of a Bill of such magnitude and importance. His objections were directed to the whole principle of the Bill. The hon. Member for the Elland Division stated that many reforms were desirable, but that this was the most urgent. That proved that the hon. Member desired to fundamentally alter the principle on which elections were at present conducted. A freeholder in London might presumably hold property in Wimbledon or Hornsey, and why should he not exercise his influence there as well ? That was the fundamental principle on which representation had been founded. Rightly or wrongly, representation was founded on the principle that ownership of land gave the right to a vote, and not by such a Bill as this could that principle be altered. That borough interests might not be swamped freehold votes were exercised in the counties, so that a dweller in a borough could have an immediate borough representative while having also a representative for the county in which his property was situated. It was manifest that the Bill did not secure the one man one vote principle, upon which much had been said, though in a certain sense it went in that direction.

What it really proposed was to disfranchise a certain number of people who hitherto had exercised voting power in certain districts. The fundamental principle that a freeholder should have a vote was one to be maintained, because it secured that local interest and influence should have representation. That was the reason why they objected to the measure. Of course, that a man who owned only a tomb in a district should thereby acquire a vote was a ridiculous anomaly.

MR. PURVIS (Peterborough): He not being an occupier.

MR. ROBERTSON said if such anomalies were collected in a Bill for abolition there would be no objection to making the law consistent with common sense. That the poor man should have a voting interest with his richer neighbour he fully agreed, but he denied that the poor man was jealous of the power other people exercised by reason of their local interests or their position in a University. Men who had more votes than one were not necessarily rich men. The hon. Member who introduced the Bill indicated that although every poor man might not have a vote, every rich man, although he might be a duffer who was pushed through a University examination, had a vote, and that was a travesty of the situation. The hon. Member also suggested a sliding scale; but that would introduce a number of complications. There was, however, one observation of the hon. Gentleman with which he thoroughly agreed. That was that while bad legislation might injure the rich man, it might mean ruin to the man who earned his bread from day to day. It was because he held that view strongly that he opposed this proposed legislation. The hon. Member also said that the system of plural voting might result in a division being represented by a man whose opinions were not in unison with those of the majority of the electors in the division, but that was, he submitted, an impossibility. A representative could not hold views differing from the majority of those who elected him. What the hon. Gentleman must have meant was that the views held by the

representative were not generally those of the great body of the electorate, but the anxiety shown by hon. Gentlemen opposite to bring in all those voters did not show the likelihood of a constituency being overborne by the votes of the plural voters to be great. Although such a thing might occur, it must necessarily be so seldom that it need not be taken into consideration.

The right hon. Gentleman had shown by the framework of this Bill that it was a practical impossibility to register a man as being entitled to vote only in one constituency, and therefore he was confining his Bill to general elections only and leaving by-elections out. This Bill did not preclude a gentleman, who had voted in one district at a general election, from voting at a by-election in another constituency. The hon. Member apparently did not agree with his so doing, but he left that matter out of the Bill because he found it impossible to prevent his doing so. It might be suggested that any person entitled to a vote in two or more constituencies should elect in which constituency his vote should be recorded, but the principle involved in this "one man one vote" or "plural voting," as it was called, did not apply to our system of election. It did apply, and could easily be made to apply, to manhood suffrage in a country where residential and property suffrage did not exist. But ours had never been a system of that kind. In this country men had a vote not because they were men, but because they had a particular interest in a particular locality. Under our system men were elected not in one but in two interests. One was a national and Imperial interest, and the other a local interest, which, if not so important, was at all events of some importance. Most electors always considered that their representative should take as much interest in their local as in national and Imperial affairs, and generally elected a man who held those opinions which the majority of the inhabitants held. Why, then, should a man, merely because he lived in another place, be deprived of voting where he had an interest? Why should he himself be deprived of his right to vote in Ireland, where he had an interest, simply because

Mr. Herbert Robertson.

he also had an interest in England in which he might have to elect to vote if this Bill became law? There was no ground, and there could be no right, to interfere with a man's right to vote in two places. His right to vote in Ireland was of no particular importance to him and he seldom exercised it, but that was no reason why he should not have it. It appeared to him that the Bill was framed in such a way as merely to raise a debate on the principle and not for the purpose of becoming law. As he took exception to the principle laid down in the Bill that in no case whatever should a man who had interests in different places give more than one vote at a general election, he should support the Amendment. A

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) said the Bill had been condemned by hon. Members opposite on the ground that it was piecemeal legislation, that the anomaly involved was small, that the anomaly of the present distribution of seats was much greater, and that the two questions ought not to be separated. That had always been the view of the Conservative Party. Whenever the Liberals had hitherto advocated the scheme of one man one vote they had been met by the cry of one vote one value. He wished to know whether that was the principle which Conservatives were proposing to adopt in their proposed Redistribution Bill, because so far the Government had given no indication that that was part of their plan. It appeared that whenever Liberals advocated "one man one vote" they were told that "one vote one value" was inseparable from it; but now that the Government proposed "one vote one value" the House was told the question of "one man one vote" was an entirely separate question and ought not to be considered at the same time. It had been said that these plural voters were only a small number of the electorate. The Member for Tunbridge estimated their number at 73,000. They did not accept that figure, but even if they were small in number they exercised an influence far in excess of their proper proportion. If he had had the command of 73,000 votes and could distribute them among the constituencies to influence

the majority he could win very nearly every election in the country. If it had not been for the plural voters he himself would have had a seat in this House many years before. Although it was asserted on the other side as a principle that wherever a man had an interest there he should have a vote, yet in the Local Government Act of 1888, which was passed by a Conservative Government, that principle was departed from and, for elections to the London County Council, plural voting was forbidden and the principle of the present Bill was adopted. The method of carrying the principle into effect now proposed was also adopted in the Act of 1888.

The opponents of the Bill had to a large extent abandoned the old argument that property and education were entitled to special privileges, but they still argued that the man who had interests in different localities was entitled to special representation in respect of each of those interests. But if a man had interests in ten different counties let him vote for ten different county councils. The House of Commons was representative of national, not local, interests. It was not a Federal Assembly representing separate boroughs and districts, each sovereign and each possessing different interests; it was the Parliament of a State one and indivisible. The opposition to the scheme seemed to be based on a sort of assumption that the House of Commons represented a group of constituencies with different views and different interests. That was not the case; it was the Parliament of one united nation, and it was only very rarely that specific local interests were brought forward in it. The average Englishman, when he voted, voted first of all as an Englishman, not as a Londoner, say, or as a Devonian. It had been said that a man might lead a dual life—a somewhat ambiguous phrase—but he was but one person, after all, with one brain, one judgment, one patriotism, and he could scarcely vary that judgment at different places. As a matter of fact, he did not—he did not, as a sort of Dr. Jekyll, vote for the Liberals in London, and then, as Mr. Hyde, go down to Devonshire to vote for those on the opposite benches. It was the man, not the House, to whom the franchise.

belonged; it was the nation, not the locality which it concerned. On these grounds he held the case for the Bill to be absolutely irrefutable.

*SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth) said that when he looked into the Bill and endeavoured to find a motive for it he could find none but the purely Party motive of abstracting votes from the opponents of the Party opposite. The Bill did not take away from property owners and others the qualification they possessed, but merely said that if they were qualified to vote in two districts they should be deprived of the power of exercising the franchise in one of them. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had said that if it had not been for those votes he would have been in Parliament some years before he was successful in obtaining a seat. Many hon. Members had sneered at ownership of property. Owners of property were regarded as millionaires and treated with contempt, and were not to have any political rights under this Bill of expressing themselves in this House. But what was the principle on which the franchise ought to be given? In times gone by there was a maxim that taxation and representation should go together in order that those who bore the burden of taxation should have a voice in the expenditure for which the money was contributed. "A stake in the country" had been sneered at, but surely a man who had "a stake in the country" was entitled to be heard.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Does the hon. Gentleman say that if one man pays ten times as much taxation as another he shall have ten times as many votes?

*SIR HENRY KIMBER said he did not say anything of the sort. All he said was that in respect of his property he should be heard, and that he could not be heard if he had not got a vote. Why should not a man who employed a large amount of labour in one constituency be allowed to have a voice in the affairs of that constituency where his property was situated? He happened to be freeholder of considerable property in Westminster and Middlesex for which he paid enormous rates but had no vote or

voice in their expenditure. Before they deprived owners of property of having a voice with respect to the taxation they had to bear, they must look at the other side of the question. He ventured to assert that every man who had an interest, no matter what that interest might be, in upholding the State and this House—anybody who contributed to the burdens of the State—should have a vote in respect to that interest. At present we gave a vote to every man in this country who could show that he was a respectable man. In that sense we already had manhood suffrage. He did not begrudge that to any man. He dissented, however, from the view that one good citizen was as good as another—at any rate in the sense of his worth to the State. It could hardly be said that a gallant general who had rendered great services to his country was only of the same value to the State as the voter who thought so little of the franchise as not to care whether he exercised it or not or would sell it for a £5 note. In the relations of the private citizen to the State it could not be said that one man was as good as another. In regard to the second vote, his opinion was that if, in addition to filling his position as a respectable citizen, a man rendered special services or was of special value to the State it was worth the while of the State to get his voice in the councils of the nation, and to give him a vote for that purpose. It was on that principle the University vote had been given.

This Bill would destroy all second votes, but before any attempt was made to destroy that which had existed for so long, good reason must be shown, and it was necessary to prove that the second vote was wrong *ab initio*. The University vote had been given because it was considered that a man who had passed through a University career was able to render to the State services superior to those of the ordinary citizen. The abolition of the second vote would have the effect practically of reducing the electorate of the City of London to the caretakers of warehouses and offices. Was that the sense in which the nation would care to have its capital represented in Parliament?

Mr. Herbert Samuel.

The peculiar position of the Metropolis was that it was an aggregation of cities, and the effect of the present system was to enable the political voice of the City, as embodied in men famous and experienced in commercial and financial matters, to be centred in the representatives whom they elected, but to allow their election to rest simply with caretakers would be absurd. He did not mean to say that the principle had been applied all round as it ought to be. If the principle of the second vote was fair at all it ought to be reconsidered upon a wider basis. It might be that distinguished generals and so forth should be admitted to the councils of the State on some principle of special representation. It was admitted that owners ought to be heard in counties and boroughs in respect of local expenditure. Why, then, when things went wrong in the locality, and an appeal was made to this House by Bill, Provisional Order, or otherwise, should they not be entitled to a vote in the representation of the same locality in Parliament? Their claim, in his opinion, was irresistible. Reverting to the point as to one citizen being as good as another, was it not time that illiterates were removed from the electoral roll? For thirty-five years education had been open to the humblest in the land, and if people had not yet taken the trouble to make themselves literate they should be struck off the roll. It was monstrous that Members should get up and claim for an illiterate man who had neglected the opportunities of educating himself an equality of value to the State with Lord Roberts or any other distinguished general.

This Bill had been suggested as one to lower the franchise. It was not only that, but more. The iniquity it would perpetrate was that while admitting a right it destroyed the power of exercising it. A more monstrous thing could not be put into an Act of Parliament, and no sane man should consider it for a moment. It would introduce a new element of disparity in the representation of the people in this House, making existing disparities more involved and complicated than ever. He had never looked at this matter from a Party point of view; he did not know whether his scheme of redistribution would tell in favour of his

own Party or otherwise. Party men would naturally consider how such proposals would affect their own prospects, but he submitted that it was the duty of anyone who promulgated such a scheme to look at the matter from the point of view of advantage to the State. Anomalies at present existed by the side of which the so-called anomaly which this Bill would remove sank into insignificance. The hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division had estimated the number of voters affected by the Bill as 73,000, and had rather minimised its effect by suggesting that there was nothing much in it after all. Personally, he thought there was much more in it than that, and he was not sure that the hon. Member for Elland was not nearer the mark in putting the number affected at something like 500,000. But even then the question sank into insignificance by the side of the glaring anomalies to which he might call attention. Under the present system there were in the House 120 Members who represented 2,162,000 out of the 7,000,000 electors, while fifty others represented altogether 186,000—millions of difference, and this Bill would introduce a new element of perplexity. In Romford there were 44,000 electors against 1,500 in Kilkenny, a disparity of thirty to one. Supposing the freeholders of Romford did pour into another constituency as out-voters, could they be begrudged the right when there was the enormous balance of thirty to one to be set right? In his own constituency of Wandsworth there were 30,000 electors, and among them were many freeholders, and he would assume that these freeholders might obtain a Conservative majority in the county which would otherwise not be obtained. Was anybody prepared to resent that when it had only one Member to represent 30,000 electors against 1,500 in Kilkenny? The question dealt with in this Bill, compared with the magnitude of these differences, was a pettifogging matter, even supposing the principle was right, which he denied. Scotland had seventy-two Members to represent a larger population than Ireland, which was represented by 103 Members. Was not the rectification of such anomalies as these much nearer to the interests of the people than the matter they were discussing?

Reference had been made to the Act of Union. But the Act of Union did not give Ireland 103 Members. The Act of Union had frequently been broken in Ireland's favour. ["Question."] When this subject came to be discussed all these matters would have to be threshed out, and it was not the Unionist Party that need fear the logic of the case. This Parliament was undoubtedly supreme within the jurisdiction of the United Kingdom. Mr. Gladstone distinctly acknowledged—for it was on that principle that he founded the Home Rule Bill—that this Parliament had jurisdiction over the terms of the Act of Union.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) asked whether the hon. Member was in order in discussing on this Bill the validity of the Act of Union in Ireland.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER thought the hon. Member was going somewhat wide of the question, but a passing reference to the Act of Union could not be prevented.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: But how does the Act of Union come into the question at all?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It was raised this morning in this way. The question of one vote one value was raised as a corollary to the single vote; thereupon it was pointed out that one vote one value required a general system of redistribution, and that would affect the distribution as between England and Ireland. However, it is not a matter which should be gone into at length, though a passing reference cannot be avoided.

*SIR HENRY KIMBER (resuming) said that possibly it was not known that 250 Members of the House represented one-half of the country, and that 370 Members, or more than a majority of the whole representation, represented only one-third of the electorate. The hon. Member for Saffron Walden had said that the cry on the Unionist side was always "Property, property, property." It so happened, however, that the Bill was an attack on the rights of property, and

when property or anything else was attacked the threatened interests had a right to defend themselves. We gave the vote to hundreds of thousands of men who were supported by the funds of municipalities, and the question was becoming one of very grave importance. In the old Republic of Rome—

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now going into a matter which clearly has no bearing on this Bill.

*SIR HENRY KIMBER thought that at any rate he had said enough to show that the grievance with which the Bill proposed to deal, if it was a grievance, could not be dealt with apart from the larger question of redistribution, and that the Bill was a pure Party movement by one political Party started for the purpose of destroying votes which they knew belonged to the other political Party.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) thought that the observations of the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken with regard to redistribution were not necessarily relevant to the Bill. It would be more satisfactory to the House to know whether the hon. Gentleman did not consider that some measure like this, which simplified the franchise by putting an end to plural voting, would be a necessary part of any measure of redistribution. They had been accustomed to hear that any measure for the abolition of plural voting should be accompanied by redistribution, but he thought they might claim on his side of the House, with equal potency, that any measure of redistribution should be accompanied by the abolition of plural voting. The Bill did not profess to deal with all the difficulties of the question; it was simply intended to lay down a general principle, and it was not meant to be discussed as though it could be carried out in its present form. It was a declaration of principle which could quite legitimately be brought before the House, and as such he intended to say only a few words upon it. Therefore it was worth while to consider what were the grounds on which the Bill was objected to.

Of three arguments advanced in favour of the present system that day,

Sir Henry Kimber.

one was that of the Member for Nottingham, who said the British Constitution was full of anomalies, that this was an anomaly: that the British Constitution was a good thing, and, therefore, this was a good thing. Apparently, according to his hon. friend, the more anomalies the better. He, on the other hand, would have thought that, if there were so many anomalies, such, for instance, as a Parliament lasting for seven years whatever the opinion of the people might be, this was a reason not for continuing anomalies but rather for reducing their number. The second reason given was that wherever a man had property he ought to have a vote. He could understand such a contention in regard to taxation or rating for local purposes by different authorities in the places for which he was rated. But Parliamentary taxation was for the whole country, and Parliamentary representation was not a representation of special interests. This argument he regarded as of no greater value than the other. The third argument, although not so frankly avowed that day as it would have been fifty years ago, was really at the bottom of the opposition to this Bill, and it was that property *qua* property ought to be represented.

*SIR HENRY KIMBER said not property *qua* property, but so far as it bore its portion of the burdens of the State.

MR. BRYCE admitted that our system of taxation was far from putting burdens where they ought to be put, and agreed that the very rich ought to pay more, but that was not secured by the present system. The real ground alleged for maintaining plural voting was that it gave more votes to property, but when it did that, it did it in the most irregular and uncertain way possible. In Belgium, where a plan of representation in proportion to property had been tried, the benefit was very small. In this country the plural voting enjoyed by property did not depend on the property but on the accident of the particular place where the property happened to be situated. It depended on no system, but merely on the question whether the man who resided in one place happened to have some property in another. He

remembered when he was at Oxford there was an old clergyman, a Fellow of his college, a strong partisan of the political Party to which he belonged, who had devoted the latter half of a long life to acquiring a great number of voting qualifications in different places. He had twenty-three of them at that time. He would not have answered the description of the hon. Member for Wandsworth. He had not rendered any special service to the community. When the general election came he spent the whole period of the election in travelling up and down the country by railway with the object of giving these votes, and was often able to give eighteen or twenty of them. The system encouraged the creation of bogus qualifications.

*SIR HENRY KIMBER: Every system allows of that.

MR. BRYCE: But the present system, so to speak, suggested it and advised it. In that way it was a perversion, distortion, and depravation of a true proper democratic system of representation. That was the long and short of the matter, and those who so believed were bound to vote against it. Reference had been made to a remark of Sir George Trevelyan's that he regarded the last Reform Bill as a final measure. But the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean had placed in his hands the reference to what Mr. Gladstone had said at that time showing that, so far from its having been proposed as a measure which in its then shape was final, it was a measure the entire principle of which was its absolute simplicity, and was not burdened with other detail because it would then be more difficult to carry. In 1891 Mr. Gladstone committed himself at Newcastle and elsewhere to the principle of the abolition of plural voting, and he was Prime Minister in the Government of 1893-4, which repeatedly announced that this was part of the electoral reforms they desired to introduce.

They had heard from the Government that they intended this year introducing a measure dealing with redistribution. He saw the Secretary to the Local Government Board in his place,

and he was no doubt thoroughly familiar with the scheme of the Government which was now in preparation. He hoped when he replied to the debate that he would tell them what the view of the Government was in regard to the question of plural voting. In 1884 it was held that any measure dealing with the franchise must be accompanied by a measure of redistribution. They had always been told that they could not deal with plural voting until they dealt with redistribution. Therefore, if the Government dealt with redistribution they ought at the same time to deal with this grotesque anomaly of plural voting. He hoped that the Secretary to the Local Government Board would tell them what the view of the Government was in regard to this question of plural voting, and he might inform the House whether they intended dealing with this anomaly in any scheme which they intended bringing before the House. It would be interesting to know what was the view of the Government on the question of plural voting in relation to redistribution.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) said that the right hon. Gentleman was mistaken in supposing that there was necessarily any connection between the two questions. He had been invited to deal with the question of redistribution, but he did not think it would come within the bounds of order if he attempted to deal with that subject. He desired at the outset to explain his position in regard to this measure. The Local Government Board had no official connection with the franchise question, and hon. Members would realise at once that this was not a Departmental question which came under the duties carried out by the Local Government Board. The subject of the Bill was hardly one to be dealt with in a private Member's measure. Private Members dealt with many things, but they might leave the Constitution alone. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Tyne was perfectly shocked at the large discussion which this Bill had opened out, and early in the debate he rose to declare that it was almost a revolution.

Mr. Bryce.

Mr. HEMPHILL said his objection was in regard to going into the question of redistribution upon this Bill. He thought that was not relevant or within the scope of the present discussion, but the Deputy-Speaker afterwards decided that it was.

Mr. GRANT LAWSON said he thought it would have been a great advantage if this Bill had been introduced from a more responsible quarter. If the Government had introduced this Bill no doubt the House would have objected to proceed with it until a Return had been issued showing whether there were many of these plural voters. According to a useful manual, "Buxton's Handbook of Political Questions," out of 6,000,000 voters in the United Kingdom only 190,000 had a plural vote. They were not the most undeserving section of the community, and there was nothing in their character to suggest that they should be deprived of their plural votes; and it could not be suggested that they were a danger to the State. Earlier in the debate it was suggested that the plural voters were not always the wisest amongst the electors. He did not say that they were, and he did not know that they always got the wisest amongst their fellow-men even in the House of Commons. He thought hon. Members would agree with him that the plural voters were not the most reckless of their constituents. The man who had a small shop in a town and got on well very often went to live outside the borough, and that man under this Bill would lose a vote. Another man living in a town might purchase some freehold property outside the town and he would also lose a vote. Plural voters were certainly not the worst class of citizens, and nothing had been put forward in this debate to justify the House reducing their voting power. This class of voters certainly did not lack interest in political questions. Many town voters would not vote unless they were driven to the poll, but the plural voter often came a long distance to vote, and generally came at his own expense. Plural voting could not defeat a popular demand or prevent the working classes from getting what they wanted, even if all the out-voters

were united. The provision in the Bill would enable a man with a plural qualification to choose which he would exercise, would play into the hands of the managers of the electoral machines, and give victory to the Party whose forces were best organised. Then the Bill was to apply only at a general election. Every one knew that there was nothing so uncertain as the result of a by-election. Politicians had often been deceived by the results of by-elections, and under this Bill the uncertainty would be increased, because the constituencies would be very different at the general elections and the by-elections. If the Bill had been directed against the creation of fagot votes, or against any of the other manifest evils of the electoral system, he should have looked on it with more favour. But as it was he could not vote for the Bill.

He was not afraid of fagot voting; it was one of those industries which had practically died out, for the reason that there had been so enormous an increase of the electorate that it was not worth while to manufacture such votes. If the Bill had been directed against any of the manifest evils of the present franchise system he would have received it more kindly. This, however, was a measure simply to take away some of their voting power from those whom he had shown had no excessive voting power at the present time, and for that reason he asked the House to reject it.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 120 ; Noes, 191. (Division List No. 193.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmot
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bell, Richard
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremner, William Randal
Crombie, John William
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Ellice, Capt. E.C. (S. Andrw's Bghs)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Findlay, Alexander (Lanark, N.E.)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Goddard, Daniel Ford

Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harcourt, Lewis
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
London, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mooney, John J.
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parrott, William

Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roche, John
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Charles E.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
Strachey, Sir Edward
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
Herbert Gladstone and Mr.
William M'Arthur

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
 Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
 Aillsopp, Hon. George
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn.Hugh O.
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitzroy
 Bailey, James (Waltham)
 Bain, Colonel James Robert
 Baird, John George Alexander
 Balcarres, Lord
 Baldwin, Alfred
 Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
 Balfour, Rt.Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds)
 Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
 Banbury, Sir Frederick George
 Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor
 Bartley, Sir George C. T.
 Bignold, Sir Arthur
 Bill, Charles
 Bingham, Lord
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bond, Edward
 Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
 Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brymer, William Ernest
 Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin Univ.
 Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc.
 Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton)
 Chapman, Edward
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coddington, Sir William
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Dickinson, Robert Edmond
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, Sir William Theodore
 Faber, Edmund B. (Hants, W.)
 Faber, George Denison (York)
 Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Mane'r
 Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
 Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
 Finlay, Sir RB (Inv'r'ss B'ghs)
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Flower, Sir Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Gardner, Ernest
 Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick

Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
 Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-
 Gorst Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Green Walford D. (Wedsbury
 Grenfell, William Henry
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Gunter, Sir Robert
 Guthrie, Walter Murray
 Hall, Edward Marshall
 Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'n derry
 Harris, F. Leverton (Tyne m'th)
 Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
 Heath, Sir James (Staffords NW
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Helder, Augustus
 Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
 Hoare, Sir Samuel
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Houlst, Joseph
 Houston, Robert Paterson
 Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
 Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hunt, Rowland
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
 Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
 Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
 Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (Denbigh
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Sir Henry
 Knowles, Sir Lees
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Sir Joseph (Monm'th
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. NR
 Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham
 Lees, Sir Elliot (Birkenhead)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 M'Calmont, Colonel James
 M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
 Majendie, James A. H.
 Manners, Lord Cecil
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
 Maxwell, W. J. H. (Dumfriesshire
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Milvain, Thomas
 Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
 Moon, Edward Robert Percy
 Morpeth, Viscount
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
 Muntz, Sir Philip A.

Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Percy, Earl
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Purvis, Robert
 Randles, John S.
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
 Remnant, James Farquharson
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Renwick, George
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
 Roper, Colonel Sir Robert
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
 Samuel, Sir Harry S. (Limehouse
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. Edw. J.
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Smith, Rt. Hn. J. Parker (Lanarks
 Spear, John Ward
 Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
 Stanley, Edward Jas (Somerset)
 Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. EH (Sheffield
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton und. Lyne
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wilson-Todd, Sir WH. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
 Wordsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wrightson, Sir Thomas
 Yerburch, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Viscount Valentia.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and
 agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six
 months.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

CATHOLIC DISABILITIES REMOVAL BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th May], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON (Hackney, S.), continuing his speech, said that according to the promoters this Bill was intended to include married women, but there was considerable doubt whether they would be brought in. It was open to question whether under the Bill in its present form a married woman holding a property right, and her husband holding another property right, would both be allowed to vote at the same election in the same district. The hon. Member for Leicester, who seconded the Motion for the Second Reading, admitted that on the whole women who held property did not want the vote because they considered it would be a nuisance to them to vote at all. This Bill would bring into the electorate a large number of occupiers who were not married; married women who occupied houses, but were living apart from their husbands; and a considerable number of lodgers. The class chiefly enfranchised by the measure would be unmarried women, and, putting aside his general objection to women voting at all, he did not think

it was desirable that the vote, so far as women were concerned, should be practically confined to those who were unmarried and to widows. Under any scheme framed for the enfranchisement of women there ought to be some means by which married women would be as much represented as the unmarried. He maintained that women were fully represented by men, that there would be no advantage in allowing them to vote, and that the present system was satisfactory to the great bulk of the women of this country.

At present women exercised enormous influence in political matters. Was there a Member of the House who had not been influenced by women in regard to measures which specially concerned them, and in which they took a definite amount of interest? Hon. Members naturally applied to their female relations to ascertain their views on these matters, and he thought it would exceedingly seldom be found that they went against them in regard to matters which were specially within their province. Women exercised a certain amount of influence at elections. The Primrose League had been mentioned, and there were other political organisations in which women took part. By that means they exercised considerable influence on the course of legislation.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.) called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present.

House counted, and forty Members being found present.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTSON said the state of the House in respect of the attendance of Members indicated the amount of interest taken in this question. Women were not the only class who under our present electoral system were represented by men. Young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-one had no votes, and yet in many instances they were quite as capable of considering matters and voting as some who had reached the qualifying age. They were represented by the fathers of the people. That had

been the state of matters all through history.

Recently in some of our Colonies a trial had been made in the enfranchisement of women, but his information was that the Colonies were not at all satisfied with the result. There was a very fair prospect of the repeal of the legislation which enabled women to vote, and of the restoration of the old condition of things which gave the control of the Administration to those persons who had the physical power to enforce the law. It was important to observe that no law had any force unless, in case of necessity, it could be enforced by physical power. Now it was proposed for the first time on a large scale—he could not admit that the trials made in the Colonies were of any great importance—in a country of first-class importance to shift the centre of power from its true base. There were more women than men in the country, and if they were to be enfranchised the country would practically be governed by them. Was it to be supposed that men would stand it? Some change would have to take place because it would be quite impossible to carry on the Government of the country under such circumstances. He could understand the proposal if Parliament was only a sort of glorified county council for dealing with domestic arrangements. But it was nothing of the kind; it was the supreme power in the country. This was not a Party question, as was proved by the fact that he was seconding the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton, whom nobody would accuse of being a Tory. In fact, the hon. Member for Northampton declared that he was the only true Radical in the House. If the Bill which had just been rejected, and which practically gave one vote to one man, had passed, it might have been necessary, to keep the balance right, to give women a vote. If every woman had a vote, women being in the majority, one could imagine how the business of this House would be carried on. Undoubtedly women would exercise their power to obtain admission into this House, and that would not be a beneficial change in our Parliamentary system. He saw so many dangers to

the country from granting the franchise to women that he heartily seconded the Motion made by the hon. Member for Northampton.

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day six months.’”—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the question.”

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said the state of the House showed that though this was one of the most important Bills which had been brought forward this session, or for many sessions, it was not one in which either the country or the majority of the House took a very serious interest. The discussion really had dwindled down to be infinitely small. He admitted that hon. Members did not know that the Bill would come on that afternoon. On the other hand, he pointed out that the Bill with which they had been dealing earlier in the day was an enfranchising Bill, and that those who supported it might have stayed to take an interest in this Bill. The debates on this very important subject had been very unfortunate. The last occasion on which the Bill was moved it came on after another Bill and there was only a very short time to discuss it. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading only spoke for ten or twelve minutes and, therefore, they had only the advantage of listening to the speeches of the hon. Member for Northampton and his hon. friend beside him. The arguments brought forward by these Gentlemen were very much weightier than the arguments offered in support of the Bill. It was conceivable, if the hon. Member who brought the Bill in, had devoted a little more time to the subject, he might have been able to adduce stronger arguments in favour of it.

Those who supported the Bill did so on sentimental grounds. One of them said that women had an inherent right to the franchise; indeed, that seemed to him to be practically the sole argument on which the

case for the Bill was based. He did not know of any country in the world in which any subject, whether a male or a female, had an inherent right to the franchise. At any rate, if he or she had an inherent right to the franchise, it had never been granted. He did not deny that it was possible to argue that women were not fairly dealt with, because the power of legislation was in the hands of men, and men, being selfish creatures, would pass laws for their own benefit. That argument, however, was not capable of proof. Many years ago there were exceedingly harsh laws in regard to property held by women, but laws had since been passed to grant women certain rights in regard to their own property and in the management of their own affairs.

He confessed that the speech of the hon. Member for Northampton, who was opposed to him on political questions, was extremely powerful and able, and his arguments were cogent and well-reasoned. He did not think that anyone would contest that the ultimate result of this Bill, if it became law, would be that women would claim to sit in the House. It had been maintained by the advocates of woman's enfranchisement that they sat on county councils, boards of guardians, and other kindred bodies. The hon. Member for Northampton had said that if he were asked by some lady Member to give a particular vote, if she were nice-looking he would not be able to resist her. He agreed that the result of having ladies sitting amongst them on those benches would not be conducive to the proper conduct of business; and should there be any serious disagreement between Members on these occasions it would be very greatly to the disadvantage of the men. They all knew that women were, by nature, different from men, and nothing could make them the same. He always understood that the average woman did not want to become a man, and the average man did not want to become a woman. The consequence of that was that the two sexes could not be put on an equality, or take part in the same pursuits, especially on such a subject as the government of the country. Everyone would recognise that women had great qualifications. They

were extremely quick to catch a point, and very quick judges of character; but they were not capable of looking at a case in all its bearings. He was sure they would never be able to convince a woman in this House if she did not wish to be convinced. He believed that there were very few instances of any Member having changed his vote by anything said in debate; but he was quite certain that if women were introduced into this House it would be useless to debate any point at all, because the women would have made up their minds before the debate began. If one argued with a woman she always got the best of it; she repeated the same argument, and when that failed she changed the subject to something else.

The hon. Member for Northampton had pointed out very truly that there were certain duties which attached to men but which women could not fulfil. Where physical qualities came in, women were not fitted by nature or inclination to cope with all the roughnesses of public life. He knew perfectly well that women did exercise a considerable influence at elections, but that was done more or less in a quiet way. He could not conceive of a woman in his own constituency, where there were a good many of them, and a considerable number of them Conservatives, taking part in a public meeting. Then there was the question of voice. Woman had not a good voice. [Cries of "Question" and "vote."] One had to consider the question in all its bearings. The hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill said he did not propose to alter the qualification of the franchise; all that he proposed to do was to admit women in the same way as men were admitted now. Now, a man could not obtain a vote unless he was a householder or a lodger, and therefore a married woman, who was not herself a householder or a lodger, would not have a vote. The result would be that in one street a married woman might have a qualification for the vote, and next door another married woman would not. Where was the sense of that? It might be said that the husband might let the house stand in the name of his wife, but that would deprive the man of his vote. Hon. Members might say that such a

thing might not be likely to occur. He disagreed with them. There were women who had such influence over their husbands that they could get anything, otherwise the husbands had an exceedingly bad time of it. It would cause unhappy relations between husband and wife. Suppose one was a Conservative and the other a Radical there would be no domestic peace at all.

There was another point of extreme importance. To enfranchise women would increase the electorate to an enormous extent. It was a fact that women exceeded men in number; and if this Bill were carried, and the Party opposite were to go in for manhood suffrage—he himself hoped that manhood suffrage would never become the law of the land—there was no doubt that the women electors would be in the vast majority. [Loud cries of “Divide.”] He really thought that hon. Gentlemen opposite could not suppose that a Bill which would probably add five or ten millions to the electorate was going to be passed in a quarter of an hour, when only two Gentlemen had spoken in favour of it. [Cries of “Divide.”] One naturally took a good deal of time and some deliberation to discuss a matter of this great importance. [Renewed loud cries of “Divide.”] Supposing the Bill passed it would lead to a great deal of domestic trouble.

MR. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) rose in his place and claimed to move “That the Question be now put.”

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER did not accept the Motion.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY said what would the result of passing this Bill

be? The result would be that the command of the physical forces of the country would remain in the hands of the women.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

FOREIGN SHIPS (STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS).

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire to what extent the statutory requirements applying to British ships trading to and from Ports in the United Kingdom should be made applicable to foreign vessels trading to and from such Ports.

Committee accordingly nominated of Mr. Crean, Mr. Charles Devlin, Sir Theodore Doxford, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. Leverton Harris, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Charles McArthur, Mr. McKenna, Mr. David Morgan, Sir Albert Rollit, Mr. Runciman, Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart, Mr. Wolff, and Sir James Woodhouse.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.—*(Sir A. Acland-Hood.)*

Whereupon MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty-eight minutes before Six o'clock, till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 5th June, 1905.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with: Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9); Wemyss Dock.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Central Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

County of London Electric Supply Company Bill [H.L.]. The consent of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1.) Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, without Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with an Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

Wellingborough and District Tramroads and Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Humber Conservancy Bill [H.L.]. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

London Gas Bill. Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit again until Tuesday the 4th of July next.

London and North Western Railway Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a. An Amendment made. Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [H.L.]; Blackpool Improvement Bill [H.L.]; Formby Township Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Stockport Corporation Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Accrington District Gas and Water Board Bill; Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill; Otley Improvement Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill [H.L.]. Committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No 5) Bill. House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3^a to-morrow.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill. Read 3^a (according to order), and passed.

Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment.

Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a to-morrow.

Donovan's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3^a to-morrow.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS—ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3392. Denmark.

No. 3393. Germany (Hamburg).

No. 3394. Venezuela (Ciudad Bolivar).

LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1898.

Return showing the total payments into and out of the Local Taxation (Scotland) Account, for the Financial Year 1904-1905.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Statistical tables for the year 1904. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 31st May, 1905, declaring that William Thirkell, rural postman, General Post Office, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).

Statutory Rules and Orders, 1905: No. 581. The Postal Order (Colonial) Amendment (No. 3) Regulations, 1905, dated 22nd May, 1905.

POLLING DISTRICTS.

(County of Warwick.) Order made by the county council of the county of Warwick, altering certain polling districts in the various Parliamentary divisions of the county.

(County of Southampton.) Order made by the county council of the county of Southampton, altering certain polling districts in the Andover Parliamentary division.

(County of Middlesex.) Order made by the county council of the county of Middlesex, rearranging certain polling

districts in the Hornsey Parliamentary division.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].

Report from the Select Committee (with Proceedings of the Committee), made, and to be printed. (No. 99). Bill reported with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday the 26th instant; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 100.)

NAVAL AND MILITARY MEDALS BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

DISLOYAL IRISH TEACHERS.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE rose "To ask His Majesty's Government whether they had had an opportunity of communicating with the chairman of the dinner held on the occasion of the National School Teachers' Conference at Sligo; whether they could now give any further information as to what occurred there; and what action His Majesty's Government proposed to take in the matter." The noble Lord said: I know that your Lordships are looking forward with great interest to the speech of the noble Duke (the Duke of Devonshire) on a subject of much national importance, and I therefore think I shall meet the wishes of your Lordships by making my remarks as brief as possible. Fortunately, I am not obliged to go into much detail on the subject, for it will be in the recollection of your Lordships that less than a fortnight ago I called the attention of the House to the alleged disloyal action of certain Irish national school teachers at Sligo. The noble Marquess who replied on behalf of His Majesty's Government (The Marquess of Londonderry) was unable to give me a satisfactory reply, and perhaps that was hardly to be wondered at, for the noble Marquess confessed that his information was principally gleaned from

the columns of the *Sligo Champion*. He was good enough, however, to promise that he would make further inquiry, and that is the reason for my putting these Questions to the noble Marquess to-day.

I believe that the Board of National Education of Ireland is a very independent body, and that if they make up their minds that they do not wish to give information on any subject it is somewhat difficult to extract information from them; but I believe they are a perfectly loyal body and court full inquiry into this matter, and I am sure they are only too anxious, if possible, to remove the slur which has fallen on the teachers in their employment, and, if I may say so, through the teachers on the whole system of education in Ireland. I am sure your Lordships will agree that it is the duty of the Commissioners of National Education to see that the children of Ireland are brought up with feelings of loyalty to our gracious Sovereign. In the rules issued by the Commissioners they state—

“The following practical rules must be strictly observed—To avoid fairs, markets, and meetings, but above all political meetings of every kind; to abstain from controversy; to be imbued with a spirit of obedience to the law and loyalty to the Sovereign; and to do nothing in or out of the school which might have a tendency to confine it to any denomination of children.”

I cannot doubt but that the Commissioners of Education in Ireland do their best to see that that rule is enforced. When I last had the honour of addressing your Lordships, I quoted from a letter of Mr. Macmanus, who was some time ago a national school teacher. Since then he has contributed a column of disloyalty to the *Irish Independent*. As I have accused certain Irish national teachers of disloyalty, I think it only right to state that a resolution was passed unanimously by the Dublin Metropolitan National Teachers' Association, on May 25th, condemning in the strongest manner possible the disloyalty at the dinner at Sligo, and stating that they regarded the conduct of the men concerned as despicable and calculated to alienate from the teachers' cause a powerful and influential section of the Irish public, and they called upon the executive to repudiate, in the name of

the organisation, the action of the men at Sligo. I hear that similar resolutions have been passed by other associations. In the meantime, I would ask His Majesty's Government to take the strongest action they can in this matter, and do their best to find out whether the reverend gentlemen who left the room when the loyal toast was proposed were, in any case, managers of national schools. I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, I am asked whether the Government have communicated with the chairman of the dinner in connection with the National School Teachers' Conference at Sligo. As I informed the noble Lord on a previous occasion, the Government communicated with the Commissioners with reference to this matter, and the Commissioners reported that they had no information which would justify them in taking any action with respect to the occurrences in question, nor had they any effective means of obtaining such information. The Commissioners have no official cognisance of the National School Teachers' Organisation, and, with the exception of the name of the president of the association, none of the names of the teachers who were stated to be present were published in the newspaper reports of the proceedings at the dinner. I am informed, however, that the Resident Commissioner, who is the permanent administrative officer of the Board, has on several occasions personally recognised the organisation to a certain extent in so far that he has received deputations from the executive of the association. In these circumstances the Resident Commissioner thought it right to communicate with Mr. Hazlett, who presided at the banquet, and he has received from that gentleman a letter, which I will read to your Lordships. Mr. Hazlett writes, under date June 1st, 1905, as follows—

“To the Resident Commissioner of National Education in Ireland.

“SIR,—In accordance with the request contained in your letter of the 29th ultimo, to the effect that I should furnish a report of the

proceedings in connection with the toast of 'the King' at the dinner of the Teachers' Congress, held in the Town Hall, Sligo, on April 26th last, and at which I presided, I now beg to submit same for your consideration.

"The number present at the dinner in question amounted approximately to 140, and of these there were probably forty or fifty who had no connection with the teaching profession. Whilst we were assembling for dinner several persons came to me, presumably guests, and asked if I really intended to propose the toast of 'the King' which they noticed at the head of the list of the toasts printed on the menu card. I replied that it had always been customary to propose the toast at the annual dinner in connection with the National Teachers' Organisation, and that I had no intention of departing from the usual custom on the present occasion. Shortly afterwards, and when we had just taken our seats for dinner, about fifteen or twenty walked out of the hall and did not return. It has been stated that this party consisted of teachers and guests. This statement is, as far as I know, inaccurate. I do not believe there were any teachers amongst this party, for, apart from other considerations, I do not think there is a teacher in all Ireland who would pay for a dinner, and then walk away and leave that dinner behind him. Dinner being over, I stood up and proposed the toast of 'the King' in the usual manner, and I regret exceedingly to have to report that at this stage a considerable number of those present remained seated. There were some cries of 'Seats' in various parts of the hall, but I should be very sorry to think that any of the teachers present were guilty of uttering these cries. I am quite convinced that they came from the guests who were present. I have seen it stated in the Press that the president 'passed hastily to the next toast on the list.' If by this Press statement it was meant to convey that it was my desire to hurry over the toast and get rid as quickly as possible of a disagreeable duty, then I have only to say that that statement is absolutely untrue. It has also been stated in the Press that numbers left the hall while the King's toast was being proposed, and that these subsequently returned. I only noticed two or three leaving at that particular time, and these were guests. The remainder of the evening passed over quietly and without any further incident of note. My opinion is that the Press reports of the dinner were considerably exaggerated. I have no doubt whatever but that the secretary of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation will, in the name of the whole body of teachers, entirely dissociate themselves from and repudiate the regrettable and unpardonable conduct of a section of those who attended the dinner at Sligo.

"I have the honour, etc.,

"J. J. HAZLETT,

"President of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation."

I have read the letter at length because, when the subject was last raised by the noble Lord, both the Duke of Rutland

The Marquess of Londonderry.

and Viscount Goschen desired to have the explanation of the chairman as to what took place at the dinner. The noble Lord quoted a resolution that had been passed in Dublin. On May 27th the following resolution was also passed in Belfast—

"That we, the members of the Belfast branch of the Irish Protestant Teachers' Union, desire to express our attachment to the throne and person of King Edward VII., and we strongly denounce the action of those delegates to the Sligo Congress who at the banquet proclaimed their disloyalty by refusing to honour the toast of 'the King.'"

My noble friend also quoted a sentence from the rules which the Commissioners have been reconsidering, and, as he informed your Lordships, it is therein stated that teachers ought to be imbued with the spirit of obedience to the law and loyalty to the Sovereign, and to do nothing in or out of the school which might have a tendency to confine it to any denomination of children. With that we concur, and we shall impress upon the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland the necessity of insisting on that rule being carried out. My noble friend has asked what course His Majesty's Government propose to take in order to obviate any repetition of such incidents. In regard to what are, to a certain extent, private gatherings, it is difficult for the Executive to interfere, but I can assure my noble friend that if he or anyone else brings before us the action of any teacher in the pay of His Majesty's Government who either shows disloyalty on his part, or is guilty of inculcating disloyalty in those under his charge, His Majesty's Government will take every step to prevent a recurrence of that conduct.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT, 1882, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.]

[SECOND READING].

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, this is the same Bill as the one which passed your Lordships' House last session, but which failed to make progress in the other House. It is of a purely technical

character. The object of the Bill is to give a wider interpretation to a section in the Act of 1882 and to give bankers that protection which I think the authors of the Act intended to give them. It has been decided by your Lordships' House—and no one doubts that the decision was perfectly right—that a banker who carries a bill of exchange to a customer's account before the date on which the bill becomes due is, in fact, lending to the customer, and therefore is not protected by the Act of 1882. This was clearly not the intention of the authors, and this Bill is intended to give bankers protection in such cases.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ⁿ."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2^a. and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

FISCAL POLICY—THE COLONIAL CONFERENCE.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE rose "To call attention to the resolution adopted by the Colonial conference of 1902 relating to future conferences; and to ask His Majesty's Government whether the Colonial Secretary has communicated with the Prime Ministers of the respective Colonies with a view to arranging for a conference to be held next year. Whether, having regard to the declarations made by members of His Majesty's Government on the subject of fiscal union with the Colonies, the Government are of opinion that an emergency has arisen, rendering it advisable to hold a special conference, as referred to in the said resolution; and whether it is contemplated to summon such special conference before or after a general election has taken place.

The noble Duke said: My Lords, my object in giving this notice and placing these Questions on the Paper is to endeavour to obtain from His Majesty's Government some clear statement and explanations which may, I trust, dispel a considerable amount of confusion which, I think, at present exists in the public mind as to the intentions of the Government of summoning a conference or con-

ferences for the discussion of the fiscal relations between this country and the Colonies and Dependencies of the Empire. I do not think it will be denied that at the present moment considerable confusion does exist. I have no doubt His Majesty's Government have a perfectly clear idea of their intentions, and they probably are under the impression that the statements which they have made on the subject have been equally clear and explicit. But I doubt very much whether in the minds of all their own supporters equally clear ideas prevail, and certainly it is obvious that in the minds of the Opposition, and I must add, in the minds of some free-trade Unionists, members of the Unionist Party, considerable confusion does still exist. That such confusion exists is, I am afraid, unfortunately proved by recent proceedings in the other House of Parliament. As an old Member of that House I regret as much as any one can do some incidents of these proceedings, but it is not our business in this House to criticise the proceedings of the other House of Parliament, and much as we—and I certainly—regret some of the things which occurred in the course of these proceedings, I still must feel, as I do, that the regrettable incidents might have been and would have been avoided if at an earlier stage clear and explicit declarations had been made, such as I have no doubt we shall receive from His Majesty's Ministers in this House.

My Lords, I conceive that a considerable part of this confusion is due to inaccurate ideas which prevail as to the holding of the ordinary, or, as it is sometimes called, the automatic conference which is due to meet next year. Therefore, I have thought that it may be advisable that I should preface the Questions I desire to put to the Government by calling attention to the resolution of the conference of 1902, which, so far as I know, is the only authority on the subject of the reassembling of that conference. An impression seems to prevail from the constant use of the word "automatic" that the conference will meet again, as it were of itself next year, and that next year the Prime Ministers of the respective self-governing Colonies will again find themselves in Downing Street,

and that in fact the conference of 1902 is simply adjourned until 1906. Now the resolution of the conference shows that this is an entire misapprehension. The terms of the resolution are these—

“That it would be an advantage to the Empire if a conference were held, as far as practicable, at intervals not exceeding four years, at which questions of common interest affecting the relations of the mother country and His Majesty’s dominions over the seas could be discussed and considered as between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Prime Ministers of the self-governing Colonies. The Secretary of State for the Colonies is requested to arrange such a conference after communication with the Prime Ministers of the respective colonies. In the case of any emergency arising a special conference may be deemed necessary. The next ordinary conference to be held not sooner than three years.”

Now, my Lords, that resolution does no more than express the opinion of the last conference as to the desirability of holding, if practicable, periodical conferences at intervals not exceeding four years, but it leaves to the Government entire responsibility for the summoning of the conference in any particular year. Such a conference can only be summoned if arrangements are made, after communication with the Prime Ministers of the respective colonies, which communication necessarily will convey full information as to the conditions under which the conference is held, and probably some intimation of the subjects which will come under consideration. It is to be further observed that the resolution makes special reference to the possibility, in the case of any emergency arising, of holding a special conference which may postpone, supersede, or precede the ordinary conference. It seems to me that there is no such thing as an automatic conference, and that no conference can meet next year without action on the part of the Government, for which action they will be just as responsible as for any action they may take in summoning a special conference.

Having, I hope, made that part of the question clear, I will as briefly as I can recall the principal declarations which have been made in connection with the summoning of a conference to consider the fiscal relations between this country and the Colonies. The first reference to a Colonial Conference was made by Mr. Chamberlain in the House of Commons

on May 28th, 1903, very shortly after he had raised the fiscal question. He then said—

“Suppose we have the authority of the nation to enter upon the consideration of this subject, the first thing we have to do is to go to the Colonies. Now, nothing could be worse than to negotiate with the Colonies and probably come to an agreement, and then at the next general election find that the whole idea was repudiated by the country. I can conceive nothing more dangerous to union than that. Therefore, before we begin to negotiate with the Colonies we must have some knowledge of what is the opinion of the people of the country with regard to the principle at stake.”

What was the principle at stake? It was the principle of the imposition of taxes upon food, which were protective in character, the only thing we could offer the Colonies to induce them to enter into fiscal relations with us. That suggestion or proposal of Mr. Chamberlain appears to have been, from the point of view of those who believed in the possibility of the policy of colonial preference, a most sensible and most businesslike proposal, and I do not understand why that proposal has ever been departed from. But that proposal met with no response from the then Government, and it was not further referred to by Mr. Chamberlain for a long time in the campaign upon which he subsequently entered. It was on August 1st, 1904, that Mr. Chamberlain returned to the subject, and he then made a totally different proposal altogether. He then said—

“I go, therefore, one step further than I have ever gone before in connection with anything this Government may do. I urge upon my right hon. friend the Prime Minister specially to consider whether, in view of the importance of this question and the primary importance of knowing what it is the Colonies really wish, what it is they are prepared to do, he should not ask them both questions; whether he should not call a conference from the Colonies, a conference of representatives to meet to consider the subject in order that the House and the country may discover whether what I have said on the subject is based upon real knowledge and experience, or whether those are right who from the first, almost before they knew what my policy would be, determined to oppose it on mere Party grounds.”

That was a proposal entirely the reverse of the original proposal. It was a proposal to call a Colonial Conference and negotiate with them before the opinion of the country on the principle at stake was ascertained; and that is the proposal, so far as I understand, that the

Government and Mr. Chamberlain are now alike pledged to support. But no answer was returned at the time to that further appeal, and, I think, that later in the session, in answer to a direct Question, the Prime Minister said that the Government had no present intention of summoning a Colonial Conference to discuss the question of fiscal relations.

However, very shortly afterwards the Prime Minister announced as a discovery of his own—having forgotten apparently that an ordinary conference was due to meet next year—that a special conference was the only solution of the difficulties in which we find ourselves placed. The conference which the Prime Minister then announced was clearly a special conference, which was only to be summoned after a general election, at which a mandate to hold it had been given by the country. We were informed that such a conference was needed because we were in an *impasse* which was dangerous to the Empire as a whole, and from which the discussion in such a conference offered the only means of escape. It was to include representatives from India and the Crown Colonies, as well as the Prime Ministers of the self-governing Colonies. Above all, it was to be a free and unfettered conference, and the delegates attending it were to be bound by no instructions.

I admit that I, myself, have never entertained any great expectations that good results would follow from such a conference. I have always thought that the principle first put forward by Mr. Chamberlain that we should ascertain the opinion of our own country first and negotiate with the Colonies afterwards was the right course upon which to proceed. I have always doubted whether the conditions laid down for the special conference were possible conditions. I have always thought that the delegates attending such a conference could not be without a knowledge of the wishes and desires of those whom they represented, which would amount practically to instructions, and that, therefore, the idea of a perfectly free and unfettered conference was altogether illusory; and I have also always doubted whether the Prime Ministers of the self-governing Colonies were likely to be willing to attend a con-

ference under such vague and uncertain conditions. I admit also that the idea of this conference has never been accepted by the Opposition. But the question is not what I think or what the Opposition think about the proposed conference. The question is what are the conditions which were clearly understood to be the conditions, under which this conference was to meet, if it ever did meet? The first was that it was not to meet till after the general election; and the next was that, whatever might be its conclusions, they were to be submitted to the people of this country and the people of the Colonies by means of another general election before any action was taken with regard to them. From the very outset, and up to a very recent time, there has never been any doubt whatever as to those essential conditions. It is true that Mr. Chamberlain protested against the necessity of a second general election to confirm the conclusions which might be arrived at by the proposed conference; but neither Mr. Chamberlain nor anybody else, so far as I am aware, has disputed the necessity or desirability of a general election to precede the proposed conference. Indeed, this Colonial Conference to follow the general election had become the main feature of the policy of the Government upon the fiscal question.

In the present session of Parliament, as well as in the last, the Government have refused to disclose their opinion upon the fiscal system advocated by Mr. Chamberlain on the ground that such a disclosure would impair the freedom of the open mind of the conference, and for the same reason neither House of Parliament has been permitted to pass any Resolution touching any of the subjects to be discussed at the conference. Very recently, however, doubts have arisen as to those generally accepted conditions, and we are led to believe that it is possible that a conference, though not the conference, may be held next year previous to the general election. I think it was my noble friend the Foreign Secretary who first gave us official intimation of such a possibility, and that the ordinary conference might meet next year, and that it might, if it thought fit, discuss the question of fiscal relations. But my noble friend added to that a statement

that there would be all the difference in the world between the discussions of a conference which met after it received a mandate from the people and a conference which met without it.

Now I desire to ask my noble friend to give us a little further explanation as to this somewhat cryptic utterance. We can all see that there is all the difference in the world between the discussions of these two conferences. What I want to know is what he considers to be the effect of that most obvious difference. Does he mean that the discussions of the ordinary conference on fiscal relations will be purely academic, mere talk, and will have no effect whatever? Is it within the power of my noble friend to bind the Government entirely to disregard and ignore discussions, and perhaps the resolutions which may be come to in such a conference? It is still more impossible for him to pledge himself that such discussions and resolutions may not be used as convincing arguments in support of a certain policy at the subsequent general election, which is to decide whether another conference is to be held for the purpose of discussing the same questions which have been already discussed. I cannot conceive any procedure which would be more prejudicial to the cause of Imperial unity than that the resolutions of a Colonial Conference should be, as they undoubtedly would be, dragged in the course of a general election into our own Party politics. To summon any conference next year that shall be empowered to discuss the question of fiscal relations would be a breach of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the assurances which have been given us.

A suggestion has been made, not by the Government themselves, but certainly by some of the supporters of the Government, that the ordinary conference which may meet next year may possibly not only meet but may supersede the conference which has been promised after a general election. I do not assume for a moment, until I hear it from the lips of a responsible Minister, that any such suggestion has ever been entertained by the Government themselves. I regret that some countenance should have been given to such a suggestion by an Answer which was given by

the Prime Minister in the other House, to the effect that the Edinburgh speech was not a pledge, but only a declaration of policy. We are not accustomed to scrutinise with verbal minuteness the declarations of Ministers of the Crown; we are not accustomed to apply to them the sort of minute examination which we should apply to a legal document or an agreement between litigants; but when a Minister of the Crown informs us that a conference will be held after a general election, plain men do not expect that it is intended that a conference will be held before a general election. I pass that suggestion by as one that is dishonouring to the Government, and I say it is my opinion that the intention of holding a conference before a general election, preliminary to that which has been promised to us after a general election, will be a breach of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the assurance that has been given to us, and that the holding of any such conference must tend to impair the perfect freedom and independence of the subsequent Imperial Conference on which the Government have always laid so much stress.

I do not think that when the Government assumed, as they have somewhat lightly assumed, that the ordinary conference may meet next year, and that it would be open to them to discuss the fiscal relations between ourselves and the Colonies, they could have fully considered what that assumption involves. It would not be, I think, a reasonable, respectful, or even a decent thing to ask the Prime Ministers of self-governing Colonies to come here, to tell them it was open to them to discuss fiscal relations and perhaps pass resolutions, and then when they have done their work to tell them it would all go for nothing, and that they were expected to meet here again next year to discuss the same questions with minds perfectly free and uninfluenced by anything which they may have resolved upon in that conference. I presume that the Prime Ministers have something to do besides travelling backwards and forwards across the seas to attend conferences here, especially if that entailed entering on perfectly fruitless and inconclusive discussions. The Questions I have put on the Paper are perfectly plain and simple, and I think they

are also legitimate, for I can conceive no point of public policy which can be in the least injuriously affected by a plain, direct Answer to them. The first Question has already been answered in the House of Commons since I put it on the Paper; we have been informed that no communications have yet been addressed to the Prime Ministers of the Colonies with a view to the conference of next year. The Government are, therefore, still perfectly free to summon that conference or not, as they may think fit. But I will add to that Question a further Question—whether, now that they have been able to consider the subject, they intend to summon that conference next year, and, if they do so intend, whether it will be with or without any restrictions on the subjects to be discussed.

As to the second Question, which is equally plain, the Government have informed us that an emergency has arisen such as that which was contemplated under the resolution of the conference of 1902, which, in their opinion, necessitates the summoning of a special conference. I ask them whether they still adhere to that intention, and, if so, whether it will be summoned before or after a general election takes place. I had no intention when I put these Questions down of making them the occasion of a speech on the fiscal question, and I have no such intention now; nor do I think the speech which has been since delivered by the Prime Minister at the Albert Hall would, of itself, render necessary any observations on my part. I did not find in that speech anything in the nature of a fresh exposition of policy; I read that speech as a plea for unity, for restored unity in the Unionist Party. I understood him to complain, to regret, that both sections of the Unionist Party—that which was in favour of tariff reform, and that which was opposed to any policy in the nature of colonial preference—were inclined to exaggerate the differences which had always existed in the Conservative and Unionist Party, and which, he thought, were not altogether absent from the Party opposite. I understood that speech as nothing more than an appeal to his followers to give a fair consideration to the proposals which he might make as to

retaliation as a means of negotiation with foreign countries, and as to colonial preference. I certainly understood him to do no more than ask them to suspend their judgment until they saw what might result from the conference which it was intended to summon.

But, my Lords, another speech, which has since been made, has placed a totally different signification on the meaning of the speech of the Prime Minister. Mr. Chamberlain has informed us that the Prime Minister's speech contained a clear exposition of the policy of the Government—not only of the Prime Minister but of the Government, at the next general election. He has informed us that it is a policy so clear that it could not be misunderstood, even by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. That policy was that tariff reform was the most important part of Unionist policy, that colonial preference was the most important part of tariff reform, and that colonial preference, therefore, would be the first item in the Unionist programme. And your Lordships must remember that it has always been admitted on both sides of the question that protective taxation of food is an essential element of colonial preference. Mr. Chamberlain was good enough to say that he could heartily subscribe to the policy thus defined by himself, and he added that if there were any extremists in the Unionist Party who were unable to subscribe to it, the Unionist Party was better without them. After the most attentive consideration which I have been able to give to it, I have found no such clear exposition of policy in the Prime Minister's speech.

If I had desired, which I do not desire, to offer any criticism of that speech, it would have been simply the old one of its vagueness and indefiniteness as to the policy which had been advocated by Mr. Chamberlain as tariff reform, but I have not been able to discover a word which would justify the commentary which has been given upon it by Mr. Chamberlain. Although I fully admit that this question does not come within the scope of the notice which I have given, I do not feel any doubt that my noble friend the Leader of the House will be glad of the earliest opportunity of stating whether

the policy which is clearly defined by Mr. Chamberlain is the policy of the Prime Minister and of the Government; whether in future we are to take the policy of the Government from the Prime Minister or Mr. Chamberlain, and, in short, whether it is Mr. Chamberlain or the Prime Minister who is Leader of the Unionist Party. My Lords, I leg to put the Question, of which I have given notice.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, the noble Duke told your Lordships a moment ago that he had placed on the Notice Paper two plain Questions to which he expected a reply, and I think it will best suit your Lordships' convenience that before I notice any other portions of the speech which he delivered I should give to those two plain Questions the plain Answers which the noble Duke calls for. The noble Duke asks, in the first place—

“Whether the Colonial Secretary has communicated with the Prime Ministers of the respective colonies with a view to arranging for a conference to be held next year.”

I think the noble Duke observed incidentally that that Question had already been answered, and that he was aware of the purport of the Answer, but I will perhaps add, for his information, that the Secretary of State for the Colonies in his communications with the Colonial Governments has certainly assumed that the resolution of 1902 would lead to the reassembling of a Colonial Conference. No arrangements have, however, been made as to the subjects which might be dealt with by that conference in 1906, supposing, for the sake of argument, that a conference were to meet in that year. The second Question asked is—

“Whether, having regard to the declarations made by members of His Majesty's Government on the subject of fiscal union with the Colonies, the Government are of opinion that an emergency has arisen rendering it advisable to hold a special conference as referred to in the said resolution; and whether it is contemplated to summon such special conference before or after a general election has taken place.”

As to that, I have to say that, if we are returned to power at the next general

election, we shall invite the Colonies and other parts of the British Empire to take part in a special conference before which the subject of colonial preference will certainly come up for discussion. That is a simple Answer to the two Questions which the noble Duke has put to me. But in his observations the noble Duke called attention to the confusion which, he said, prevailed in the public mind on this subject—confusion which, he said, was largely due to the inconsistencies and discrepancies which he detected in the statements which have been made from time to time by His Majesty's Ministers.

I am tempted to digress for a moment on the subject of Ministerial speeches. It is, I think, a not altogether fortunate feature of our modern political life that Ministers, and particularly Prime Ministers, are constantly expected to deliver public speeches on the platform upon the most important subjects. The result is that an immense number of *obiter dicta* are accumulated which afford opportunities for the kind of comment and criticism to which we have listened to-night, and these speeches are, of course, supplemented by the ingenious interrogatories to which Ministers have from time to time to submit, with the result that boundless opportunities are offered for that verbal minuteness of examination which the noble Duke told us this evening he desired to avoid. Although in such circumstances it would, I cannot help thinking, be not very unnatural that there should be some slight discrepancies of diction, I submit to your Lordships that upon the point with which the noble Duke has dealt to-night the main statements of the Prime Minister have been absolutely clear and distinct. We have been referred to the Edinburgh speech. May I read to your Lordships a short extract from that speech? It runs thus—

“My view, therefore, is that the policy of this Party should be, if we come into power after the next election, to ask the Colonies to join a conference on these lines—a conference in which the discussions shall be free, but whose conclusions shall not commit any of the communities concerned to any large plan of Imperial union on fiscal or other lines unless their various electorates have given their adhesion to the scheme.”

The Duke of Devonshire.

I desired to read that passage to your Lordships in order to emphasise the words—

“If we come into power after the next election.”

At Manchester the Prime Minister made another not less important declaration, and one not less distinct. He described the conference, and he went on to use these words—

“When these delegates have come to a conclusion, as I hope they will, when they have approved a scheme, as I trust they may, that will have to be referred not merely to the electorates of the various self-governing Colonies, but to the electorate of this country.”

The Prime Minister has again and again announced in public that to these pledges he adhered, and that he had no intention of departing from them. The result of that seems to me to be this—that you have, in the plainest and most distinct language, the announcement of the Prime Minister that if we come into power after the next general election, and only then, there will be a special conference held after that election, and that the conclusions of that conference would be submitted to the judgment of the country on the occasion of a second general election. That seems to me to be a plain statement which needs no further explanation.

It is quite true that when those statements were made both those who made them and, I think, those who listened to them were under the impression that in the natural order of things a general election would take place before a conference was likely to be held.

But during our more recent discussions a new hypothesis has been advanced—the hypothesis which the noble Duke elaborated so fully during his speech. The hypothesis is that the time might come when, for one reason or another, it would be desirable to hold another conference, and that at that time the present Government might still be in power. And upon that we are asked what, in such an eventuality, would happen? Would the conference meet? If it meets, what will it do? If it comes to any conclusions, what will be the weight and importance of those conclusions? The noble Duke, I think, suggested that

we might possibly take an unfair advantage of any conclusions which a conference, so summoned, might arrive at in order to prejudice public opinion in this country with regard to the question of tariff reform. I cannot help thinking that we might well protest against being asked to give to the public premature revelations either as to the date of the dissolution or the date at which it might suit those concerned that a conference should be held. I am not aware—I can be corrected if I am wrong—that it has been usual for the Government of the day to take the Opposition of the day into its confidence as to the precise moment when an appeal was likely to be made to the constituencies.

As to the date of the meeting of the conference, I will ask your Lordships to bear in mind that that is a matter which certainly does not rest with the Government alone. It rests not only with the Government, but with the Colonies, and I am bound to say that while I differ from much that was said by the noble Duke, I agreed with him when he took exception to the use of the word “automatic” in connection with the conference which might be held in the year 1906. I think it is a misnomer. I do not know who invented the term; it was a convenient way of describing the recurrent ordinary conference as distinguished from the special conference, and it has acquired a certain currency in the language of the moment. The noble Duke is quite correct in saying that such a conference—call it automatic or not—could not be called together except upon the responsibility of the Government of the day. It is, however, equally true that it could not be called together unless the Colonies desired to take part in the deliberations of such a conference. I do not know that there is very much advantage in pursuing these conjectural arguments, but if the noble Duke asks me for my opinion—for the opinion of His Majesty's Government—I will tell him that in our view it is quite conceivable that a conference might meet in the year 1906 in spite of the fact that His Majesty's Government were still in power at the time, and that no appeal to the constituencies had therefore taken place. I will say that if, for any particular

reason, the Colonies specially desired to send their representatives to this country in such circumstances, we should certainly think twice before we discouraged them from doing so; and I would add that I feel no doubt that, if the Colonies did think it worth while to send their representatives here, those representatives would find useful and important work to do.

I am struck in these discussions by the fact that we constantly speak as if the only work which the Colonial Conference could possibly undertake was the task of considering the question of tariff reform. You will find that at previous conferences the colonial representatives have in fact discussed a number of other questions, such, for example, as shipping subsidies, weights and measures, patent law, and questions concerning the administration of posts and telegraphs; and I have even heard it suggested not long ago by a friend and ally of noble Lords opposite that if the Colonial Conference were to come together, it would very likely desire to deal with the question of Chinese labour. I say, therefore, that there is to my mind nothing abhorrent in the idea, supposing His Majesty's Government to be still in power next year, of a Colonial Conference being held in such circumstances. I go further, and I say that its conclusions, whatever they might be, would in our view be entitled to the utmost respect; and that we do not for an instant believe that, even if we desired to do so, we could withhold those conclusions from the knowledge and consideration of the people of this country. But, having said that much, I certainly wish to add that in our opinion, if I may repeat the words which I used at this Table not long ago and which the noble Duke did me the honour of quoting, there would be all the difference in the world between a conference held under those conditions and a special conference summoned after a general election and armed with a mandate derived from the people of this country.

Such a conference—a conference held before the general election, a conference which the noble Duke describes as “an ordinary conference”—would certainly not, in our view, as far as the question of colonial preference is concerned, be a perfect or complete conference. India

would not be able to take part in its deliberations, and neither on the side of the Imperial Government nor on the side of the Colonies would it be possible for those who participated in its proceedings to do so with the authority and with the confidence which they would derive if they had been fortified by a mandate from the people of this country received at the general election. I say, therefore, unequivocally, that in our view such a conference, if it were held, could not supersede or take the place of that special conference to which the Prime Minister referred, and which we should desire to summon after a general election had taken place. Nor should we, on the strength of the conclusions of such an imperfect conference, consider ourselves justified in recommending to the people of this country a policy involving fundamental alterations in the relations of the different parts of the British Empire to one another.

I have treated the noble Duke's hypothesis seriously, and with the respect to which anything coming from him is entitled; but I am bound to say that I feel strongly that the discussion of this point has a considerable amount of unreality about it. I ask your Lordships, as practical men of business, to consider what the situation is likely to be when the four years have expired, and when the so-called automatic conference might be assembled in this country. It would be due to assemble in the month of June, 1906. Now, by that time His Majesty's Government will be half-way through the sixth year of their term of office. I find that of fourteen Governments since the year 1837 only two have reached the full limit of six years; and, therefore, it seems to me not unreasonable to say that by the month of June, 1906, according to all human probability, we shall be within a measurable distance [much laughter]—well, I will say upon the eve—of a general election. I ask your Lordships whether it is very likely that at such a moment and in such circumstances any Government will be very likely to press the Colonies to send their representatives here to take part in such deliberations; and I also ask your Lordships whether, looking at it from the other point of view, it is very likely that

the Colonies themselves would care to send their representatives for such a purpose.

The noble Duke drew a picture of the colonial delegates assembling here, encouraged by His Majesty's Government, to break their teeth upon all these difficult problems; and then of our telling them that they had better go away, because there would be a general election followed by a second conference, and that all their labour was in vain. But surely that is a consideration which would occur to anyone, not after the delegates had arrived, but when we were considering whether to summon the delegates or not. Looking at it therefore as a practical question, it seems to me humanly certain that these difficulties which the noble Duke anticipates will not arise, and that we may safely concern ourselves, not with that which will precede a general election, but with that which will follow it. At that general election the subject of tariff reform will beyond all question loom largest in the mind of the public. It is not a question which, even if we wished it to take a back seat, would be content to do so. Nor shall we attempt to smother or get rid of it. In this connection the noble Duke referred to the speech delivered by Mr. Chamberlain on Saturday last, and he took exception to that speech as differing widely from the speech delivered by Mr. Balfour at the Albert Hall. I do not know that I have collated the two speeches with the same care that the noble Duke has bestowed on them. But I confess it seemed to me that Mr. Chamberlain had taken his description almost textually from Mr. Balfour's speech. [Cries of "No, no!"] Will the noble Duke tell me where the difference is?

THE EARL OF ROSEBURY: Will the noble Marquess read out the words quoted by the noble Duke?

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE:** The words attributed by Mr. Chamberlain to Mr. Balfour were that—

"Colonial preference is the most important part of tariff reform."

That appears to me to be a truism. He said that colonial preference would therefore be the first item in the future Unionist

programme. I do not know whether those are the exact words used by Mr. Balfour or not, but of this I am sure, that Mr. Balfour dwelt, as I did a moment ago, on the fact that perforce this subject, I mean the subject of a Colonial Conference to which the question of colonial preference was to be referred, would assert itself and occupy the most prominent place in the minds of the constituencies.

If I had known that the noble Duke was going to compare these two speeches so minutely I would have taken more trouble to examine the two texts. But at any rate I will take upon myself to say that in our proposals, whenever the time comes for going to the country, we shall certainly put in the forefront of our programme, in the first place, the policy of retaliation as described by Mr. Balfour at Sheffield, and in the next place the policy of calling a free and unfettered Colonial Conference at which the question of colonial preference will certainly be examined. We implore those of our friends who believe that the relations between the different parts of the Empire are capable of improvement not to prejudge the question, and not to assume, as the noble Duke assumes, that this conference is predestined to failure. As for us, we shall abide loyally by the result of the appeal which will be made to the people of this country. If we are successful we shall not depart from the pledges we have given; if we are not successful, then we disappear and our pledges with us. It will then be for noble Lords opposite and their friends to show us—and I hope that at the proper time they will condescend to do so—how they intend to deal with a question which I honestly believe has moved the people of this country as no other question in recent years has moved them.

***LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD:** My Lords, I am sure the majority of your Lordships will have heard some portions of my noble friend's speech with great satisfaction. Although his language has been somewhat diplomatic, we understand there is to be no conference summoned under the resolution of 1902 before the next general election. If this be so, I would appeal to my noble friend

whether the opinion, which he has expressed as that held by His Majesty's Government, ought not to be specifically announced. He has told us that the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, has made suggestions to the Colonies, and informed the Prime Ministers that this conference is likely to be held, and that though no specific arrangement has been made as to the terms, yet the Colonial Ministers have been informed by the Colonial Secretary that there is a prospect of the conference meeting. Surely, in courtesy to the Prime Ministers, the opinion of the Government ought to be announced.

As the noble Duke has pointed out, it must be by the summons of His Majesty's Government that the colonial representatives will come here. At present the Colonies are left in an uncertain position by the statement of the Government, and the doubt which is bound to arise among the colonial representatives as to whether or not the fiscal question could be raised by them at the conference. A statement ought to be made by His Majesty's Government clearly defining the colonial position as well as their own, for it is quite possible that, as the question stands at present, a colonial representative might come forward at the conference and insist upon discussing great questions of Imperial policy, or to urge that the corn or meat of his colony should be given a preference over the similar imports of other nations. Can any member of His Majesty's Government say that such a discussion as that may not take place if such a conference were held in 1906? But the serious portion of the statement made by the noble Marquess affects every man in the country who makes free trade a conspicuous portion of his political programme. More important than anything in the noble Marquess' speech is, perhaps, what he has left unsaid.

A statesman of the highest authority, who aspires to control the action of Parties in relation to fiscal policy, announced on Saturday the policy of His Majesty's Government, apparently with a full appreciation of the responsibility of the statement. It was not the right hon. Gentleman's own policy, or even the policy of the Prime Minister, but the

Lord James of Hereford.

policy of the whole of the Unionist Party; and what everybody wishes to hear is a simple "Yes" or "No," as to whether that statement is correct. I do not think the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs quite appreciated the language of Mr. Chamberlain. This is what he said—

"Mr. Balfour says that colonial preference is the most important part of tariff reform. Mr. Balfour says that colonial preference will therefore be the first item in the future Unionist programme.

The noble Marquess asked, Is not this true? Will not the question of a Colonial Conference be the question before the country at the next election? I have no doubt it will; but that is not what Mr. Chamberlain said. Speaking for the Unionist Party and for the Government, he pledged himself that the principal feature of the programme of the Unionist Party as a whole at the next election shall be colonial preference; and he has said, and Mr. Balfour has said, that colonial preference cannot be carried into effect without imposing taxation on the necessities of life. Those who differ from this policy, however, are apparently to be told that the sooner they quit the ranks of the Unionist Party the better it will be.

Now, in all courtesy, I ask my noble friend whether he agrees that if a Unionist cannot see his way to put taxation of food as the first item in the Unionist programme, then he ought to leave the Party. Personally I do not want to leave the Unionist Party. But I say that if taxation of food is to be the first item in the Unionist programme, if this test of Mr. Chamberlain is to be the test applied to Unionists by the Government, many a member within the ranks of that Party now, and many more outside, who in loyalty and allegiance to their leader have remained silent up to now will not accept this test. They will make it their first effort during the existence of their political life to strive against this policy which has been announced as being necessary to their political existence. The future may be a sad one for many Unionist free-traders. That future, according to this decree against them, will have to be solved by events and action; I cannot foresee it, I cannot foretell with what Party we shall be

in alliance; but, my Lords, we shall be in alliance with men in this country who are unselfish, not caring for their own gain. We shall have as allies men of common sense desiring to see the prosperity of our country and the people, who already suffer from a scantiness of the necessities of life and whose condition we will not injure if we can possibly prevent it. Some members of the Unionist Party who hold these views, those who have laboured hard to support the Unionist Party, looking with apprehension to the future that will come, venture to speak now and to express a hope that even yet something will be done by men within the Party to check this wild career of ambition and recklessness.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I can well understand my noble and learned friend opposite, who until lately was a member of the present Government, making a strong protest; and we who adhere strongly to the great principles of free trade are, I think, justified in rising to express our opinions on the Motion of the noble Duke. Why has this Motion been brought forward? It has been brought forward because recently there has been a departure from the earlier utterances and pledges of the Prime Minister at Edinburgh and elsewhere. We do not complain of the original statements of the Prime Minister. They were clear and definite, particularly those to which the noble Marquess has referred. But later we have found a great vagueness and uncertainty about the position of the Prime Minister, and we consider it to be indispensable to have a clear declaration of policy from His Majesty's Government.

We all know that an attempt was made to obtain that declaration in another place, and subsequently a vote of censure was submitted; but it could not be brought forward owing to the unfortunate illness of Mr. Balfour. Since then the Prime Minister has happily recovered and made a speech to his supporters at the Albert Hall; but even in that speech we do not find any assertion of the original pledges distinctly made. Again there is an element of vagueness and doubt which, I am afraid, has so

often characterised the speeches of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister repudiated the word "pledge." He said this was a declaration of policy at Edinburgh to his own followers, and was not a pledge made to the country at large. In the debate, nearly two months ago, the noble Marquess spoke of pledges, and again on this occasion he spoke of pledges, and I think it inconceivable how utterances like those of a Prime Minister could be other than pledges to the country at large and to those who study this subject. These pledges, moreover, regulated votes and the action of many in the House of Commons who belong to his Party. But it affects the whole country besides, and therefore it seems to be essential that we should get a clear utterance again of the policy of His Majesty's Government.

The noble Marquess, as far as I can make out, has repeated very much what he said in his speech of April 11th in this House. He stated that if the present Government were in power they would call a conference after the general election, but that no general conference would be held unless a previous election had taken place, and that when that conference had debated and, with the Colonial Premiers, had formulated proposals those proposals would be again submitted to the country. I understood the noble Marquess to repeat those statements to-night as being the deliberate opinion of His Majesty's Government. He rather hinted, as has been often hinted before, that before long there will be a general appeal to the country and that that would solve a great many difficulties. The noble Marquess was not so clear in regard to the conference to be held on the basis of the conference of 1902. He said it is conceivable it might be held, but I think on the whole we might infer that the probability in his mind was that the Government and the Colonial Secretary would not summon that conference.

The difficulty about this conference has been very great, and there were two alternative suggestions for solving that difficulty. One was not to hold the conference, and the other was a dissolution early next year. So far as I am concerned I lean towards a dissolution rather than the other solution. I can only say that the solution hinted

at is one that will be welcome to all those with whom I act in Parliament. The noble Duke referred to the speech of the other great leader—I am not sure whether he is the opponent, rival, or ally of the present Prime Minister. If we cannot get all the information we want from the speech of the Prime Minister, I think we are bound to see what Mr. Chamberlain has said in his speech at St. Helens. I do not think the noble Marquess properly interpreted what he said on that occasion. Mr. Chamberlain said—

“We have a policy on which we are united—a policy prepared by our leader and accepted by the majority of the people.”

And he went on to say that he had confidence in the Prime Minister, and that every loyal Unionist would be grateful to him for the lead which he had been able to give them. And then Mr. Chamberlain used these words—

“Mr. Balfour says that colonial preference is the most important part of tariff reform, and that colonial preference will, therefore, be the first item in the future Unionist programme.”

—and he referred to what has been said over and over again, that in order to have colonial preference it is essential that there should be a certain duty upon food.

***THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE:** In saying that the right hon. Gentleman was careful to explain that he was expressing his own opinion.

***EARL SPENCER:** I quite admit that he interpolated some sentences between his description which I have just given of the Government Policy and all he said about duties on food, but everybody knows that colonial preference cannot be given unless we put a duty upon food, whether corn and wheat in regard to Canada, wool in regard to Australia, or meat in regard to New Zealand. We are bound, then, to ask distinctly whether His Majesty's Government do fall in with this declaration of their policy, which was given with such authority and clearness by the right hon. Gentleman. Then we have, besides that, the right hon. Gentleman's view with regard to the conferences. At Luton he most clearly laid down his difference

Earl Spencer.

from Mr. Balfour on that subject, and he said he could not possibly agree to delaying the matter for the period that would be necessary if, after the conference had been held, the question was referred for a second time, for a mandate from the people. If Mr. Chamberlain now declares that he entirely agrees with the Prime Minister, whom he calls his leader, are we to understand that Mr. Chamberlain has given way on that point or has the Government given way? The question is so important, having moved the country more than any question has done for many years, that we are bound to press for a clear Answer—Does the Government agree to the policy which Mr. Chamberlain says they have now put forward, and as to which he says he entirely agrees?

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH My Lords, I am rather surprised that no member of His Majesty's Government has risen to answer the appeal made to them by my noble friend near me (Lord James of Hereford) and by the noble Earl opposite. I agree that they are entitled to say that no definite notice has been given of this particular Question, but it seems to me that the Question they are now asked is so simple that it is inconceivable that they are not able to answer it without notice. I will endeavour to state it in, I hope, calm and accurate language, and I at once admit that if they prefer not to give an Answer to-day they are within their rights. But the particular Question to which I and others want an Answer is one of such vital importance to us, believing ourselves to be loyal members of the Unionist Party, that we desire to know exactly where we stand.

Most of us, I think, have read the speech delivered by the Prime Minister as our leader at the Albert Hall on Friday. I am bound to say the suspicion rises in my mind that all the members of His Majesty's Government have not read the speech which Mr. Chamberlain made at St. Helens. For my part, I read the Prime Minister's speech as a temperate and careful attempt to heal differences in the Unionist Party. I am perfectly certain that was his intention, though I am obliged to say I think that in some

respects his language was not altogether distinct. There can be no doubt, however, that in that part of his speech which was devoted to the fiscal question he desired to heal Party differences rather than to accentuate them. He distinctly asked—he put it as a question, and not as a criticism—whether we had not been too ready to magnify our differences, to separate ourselves into different sets of organisations; and he added that there had always been differences in the Unionist Party on economic questions. These are the words which, after that preamble, he used—

“My complaint about our friends is not that they differ upon free trade and protection, but that they cannot sink a difference which is, in my judgment, immaterial to the programme which I have ventured to lay before the country and before the Party to which I belong for their acceptance.”

And in regard to the Colonial Conference the Prime Minister took the same line. He asked that the whole subject should be dealt with on Imperial grounds, that there should be a free conference with our fellow-subjects in the Colonies and India, and that the country should suspend their judgment until they saw the plan; and then he asked, Is that an unreasonable demand? I think that as it stands it is not an unreasonable demand. I say so frankly.

I separated myself, as everybody knows, from my colleagues on the question of retaliation, and I did so because I could not understand how, consistently with free trade, that policy was to be carried out. But now the Prime Minister asks us to suspend our judgment, and asks if that is an unreasonable demand. I say that it is not an unreasonable demand. But that is not the position taken up by the influential member and supporter of the Party who spoke at St. Helens. After saying that he expected the whole country would unanimously call for a conference, the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to give what he described as the official policy at the next election. Mr. Chamberlain said—

“The Prime Minister said that colonial preference is the most important part of tariff reform, that colonial preference will therefore be the first item in the future Unionist programme, and that there should be a free conference, and that we should be free afterwards

to consider and deal with the results, whatever they may be.”

But the right hon. Gentleman did not suspend his judgment. He assumed that the proposed conference would not be a free and unfettered conference, that, on the contrary, the Government would go into it with a policy of preference, which, as we all know, includes the taxation of food, and he added that those who, like myself, were not able to see eye to eye with him on that point, had better pack up our luggage and depart from the Unionist Party. I ask, Is that the correct version of the Prime Minister's view of the Unionist programme at the next election, that if we cannot agree to accept colonial preference we are to be drummed out of the Party? I do not know whether I have a right to ask for an Answer now. If my noble friend says he is not prepared to answer that Question, all I can say is that I am sorry I spoke at all; but if the Government do take that line I am bound to say that on the earliest possible date after the Whitsuntide recess I shall ask the Question after full notice, in order that I may know whether or not this is a correct interpretation of the policy announced by the Prime Minister at the Albert Hall.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, I do not rise for the purpose of making a speech on the fiscal question. But I rise as a member of His Majesty's Government to make a protest and to say that I absolutely decline myself to be responsible for what is said by others who are not members of the Government. It is a very remarkable condition of things. Mr. Chamberlain—of whom I will never speak without admiration and regard—left the Government because he would be more able to assist the cause he had at heart in being perfectly independent of the Government, neither committing the Government by what he said nor being committed himself by anything the Government might say. That was the ground on which Mr. Chamberlain left the Government.

From time to time an effort has been made, not to ask Ministers what their views are on such and such a subject—although I cannot help thinking that the

cross-examination which my noble and learned friend indulged in is becoming a rather serious element in political life—not only are we to be answerable for what we say or do, but the examination must go to what we think. It appears to me that that is carrying the power of cross-examination a little too far. So far as this particular question is concerned, I beg to protest as one member of the Government against being called upon to give any explanation of what has been said on behalf of the Government—if it were so said by Mr. Chamberlain, though I do not think it was—other than the utterances of my own colleagues in the Government.

What right has anybody to ask me or any member of the Government whether or not something which has been said about the Government is accurate? We are answerable for ourselves, for what we say and do, and even if Mr. Chamberlain had made a statement as to what is the future policy of the Government—which I think the right hon. Gentleman has not made—I for one should absolutely refuse to answer any Question as to whether or not the Government assented to that statement. I think a total misinterpretation has been placed on the actual language used. What Mr. Chamberlain said was that the Colonial Conference should be absolutely free. And he asked that those represented at the conference should be free afterwards to consider and deal with the results, whatever they may be. I notice that the word “afterwards” is passed over, and it appears to me that that word puts an entirely different interpretation on the language used. I do not admit that Mr. Chamberlain has committed the Government by any such statement as he is supposed to have made, and, if he had made it, I entirely deny the right of anyone to ask whether or not the Government assent to that statement.

THE EARL OF ROSEBURY: My Lords, I have listened with some surprise to the various statements made on behalf of the Government in the course of this discussion. The noble Marquess opposite and the noble and learned Earl who has just spoken equally complained of the cross-examination to which the Government is exposed in this and the

other House. They seem to think it a very surprising and noxious growth in our present political system. May I humbly insinuate to them that if that system of cross-examination has grown up, it is not even yet sufficiently perfect to elicit any very direct Answers. If that system of cross-examination has grown up, it is not due to any anxiety on the part of members of the Opposition, or those even who are not members of the Opposition, to display a forensic rivalry with the great masters of that art. It arises entirely from the nature and character of the declarations of the Government themselves.

I am sorry to say that even the noble Marquess opposite, who usually lays down with admirable precision what it is he wants to say—a precision which I remember Mr. Gladstone once told me was one of the most difficult of Parliamentary arts—even the noble Marquess, I say, displayed something less than his customary ingenuousness in dealing with what I must say is the insoluble problem which was submitted to his notice by the noble Duke towards the conclusion of his speech. The noble Marquess was asked to explain a passage in Mr. Chamberlain's speech. I will not say he misread the passage, but he put so grave a gloss upon it, omitting the essential words of the passage, that he made out that Mr. Chamberlain had referred in a philosophical spirit to what was likely to be the dominant issue at the next general election, and not to what Mr. Chamberlain did actually say, which was that certain policies had become the policies of His Majesty's Government. As to that declaration of Mr. Chamberlain, which I frankly admit forms no part of the Question of the noble Duke of which notice was given, and which, therefore, the Government is entitled not to answer on the present occasion, I confess that, however long the notice given by Lord Balfour of Burleigh may be, the Answer will be somewhat difficult to give. But whatever the Answer of the Government may be to that Question, it had better be of a sufficiently clear and definite character when it does come.

Why is it that we attach importance to the words of Mr. Chamberlain? The noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack

spoke of his regard and affection for Mr. Chamberlain, but washes his hands entirely of what Mr. Chamberlain may say. He also, in dealing with this particular passage, read quite a different passage, which appears to be a favourite practice of His Majesty's Government. If you quote a passage in the middle of Mr. Chamberlain's speech the noble and learned Earl is apt to quote the peroration. If you quote another passage the noble Marquess opposite will quote the exordium, and so forth. That is not legitimate argument. The noble and learned Earl entertains a great regard for Mr. Chamberlain, but he declines to be bound in any way by anything Mr. Chamberlain has said. But, unfortunately, all through this piece, whether you like it or not, you have been indissolubly bound up with Mr. Chamberlain.

I will not allude once more to the familiar and hackneyed quotation from your own organ which said, when Mr. Chamberlain left the Government, that he and the Prime Minister were playing their game with the skill of two practised partners at whist. That has left an impression upon our minds which nothing is likely to remove. But you may say that you are not responsible for your organ, that *The Times* was uncontrollable, that that was an outburst of sincerity which you disavow. But, at any rate, you cannot deny this, that when Mr. Chamberlain left the Government, he left behind him the most sacred pledge and guarantee of his connection with the Government, and your adherence to his policy, in his son, who became the director of the fiscal policy of this country in the Cabinet. Therefore, I say it is all very well for the noble and learned Earl to declare that Mr. Chamberlain is simply a friend in private life whom he meets occasionally in the pleasures of unfettered society, and that he has nothing whatever to do with him and his opinions in public life. That is an explanation so thin that I fear, in the impartial judgment of your Lordships, it will not wash for a moment.

Why is it that you are constantly subjected to cross-examination? It is because of the varying, the elusive, and the ambiguous nature of your utterances. If I pause before my adjectives, it is

because I wish to be restrained by the courtesies of debate. But I confess that the impression left on my mind by the statement of the Prime Minister which preceded the regrettable, but not wholly unexplainable and unnatural, outburst in the House of Commons was that that statement was by far the most extraordinary ever made by the holder of so exalted an office to the listening Commons of England. His explanation with regard to the Colonial Conference was a three-fold one. He had, it is true, pledged himself, and the noble Marquess has read his pledge and reiterated it, as I understand it, to-night; his pledge at Edinburgh with regard to the Colonial Conference was that it should be preceded and succeeded by a general election. That seemed to Mr. Chamberlain a somewhat cumbrous proceeding for a matter of such immediate and vital interest as the reuniting of an Empire which was on the point of dispersing and scattering to the winds if it did not adopt Mr. Chamberlain's policy; but in spite of that the Prime Minister held his ground. Then there arose an idea that the Prime Minister was contemplating the summoning of a Colonial Conference next year, and to that he replied, as I understand him, that he did not see why he should not summon a Colonial Conference next year, and when he was confronted with his own statement at Edinburgh he gave a triple explanation to which I will refer.

But before I refer to it I wish to recall to your Lordships the exact circumstances under which that speech was made at Edinburgh. I was living near Edinburgh at the time, and I heard something of its private history, because even the secrets of the Conservative Party occasionally transpire. It was originally a private house dinner of a Conservative Club at which the Prime Minister, who also lives near Edinburgh, was to meet a few friends and political supporters. But immediately before that meeting took place, in view, as was thought—but we must never do more than surmise respectfully as to the intentions of the Government, or we are accused of base innuendo—in view, as it was supposed, of a speech Mr. Chamberlain was about to make, and which was

to inaugurate Mr. Chamberlain's autumn campaign, the Prime Minister sent word to say that reporters were to be present, as he had to make a highly important announcement—again, as was thought, with a view of getting the first word in his autumn campaign before Mr. Chamberlain opened his. I only recite that history in order to show that this was not an accidental or sudden outburst of the Prime Minister's, cheered by the genial banquet of the Conservative Club of Edinburgh; it was a deliberate declaration of policy, of which the Press and the public were warned, and which was to be the guide and the beacon to the Unionist Party throughout the constituencies, and in that spirit it was made.

Now the Prime Minister, in May, 1905, is confronted with his declaration of August, 1904, and he says that that declaration is of no importance whatever. He little knew that the noble Marquess was going to read it out as if it was an extract from the Old or New Testament; he himself dismissed it for a declaration to which no importance whatever was to be given. He gave this triple explanation. In the first place the Prime Minister had forgotten the regular Colonial Conference which was to meet in 1906. Mark that! His speech was to relate entirely to the question of a Colonial Conference; he must, not inconceivably, with a view to the preparation of that speech, have referred to the Report of the Colonial Conference of 1902; but whether he had or not, chronology is chronology, and he must have been aware, even in his most heedless moments, that a conference which was to meet every four years, and which had last met in 1902, was to meet in 1906. No; according to the declaration of the Prime Minister now, he was thinking so Imperially that he had entirely forgotten the existence of that Imperial Conference.

What is the next point of his explanation? That, I think, was the most disastrous of all; it was that it was no pledge at all, but only a pledge made to his Party. I have always admired the uncomplaining and undeviating loyalty of the Conservative Party under the most untoward circumstances, and I confess I have sometimes wished that other Parties displayed the same united front under

trying circumstances as the Conservative Party has under conditions which would spell disaster elsewhere. I do not suppose that when they prepared this monster gathering at the Albert Hall they could have foreseen the cruel buffet that the Prime Minister was about to administer to them in the House of Commons. When the stereotyped address was sent down to the constituencies, to be reproduced in illuminated forms at the Albert Hall, I do not suppose that the Conservative Party anticipated for a moment that it would be told that promises made to that Party were of no particular value or consequence, that they were but husks to feed the temporary cravings of the Conservative Party without any ultimate object or purport whatever. If under the circumstances of the present explanation that union is still maintained, all I can say is that a more long-suffering faction than the Conservative Party has never yet been known to ancient or modern history.

There were two explanations; one was that he had forgotten the conference, the other that it was only the Conservative Party, and "Who cares what anybody says to the Conservative Party?" But, as if that was not enough, he supplied a third explanation. "If I did remember the Colonial Conference, if I did mean to make a public pledge to the country, what does it matter? I have a right to change my mind, every man has a right to change his mind; this is May, or June, it was then August or September; who can expect the head of the most powerful Party in this country, the Prime Minister of this great Empire, to keep his mind uncontaminated and unchanged for eight or ten months together?" These are explanations which I believe even the noble Marquess must admit, in the calmer recesses of the Foreign Office when he is not exposed to the polemical agitations which he justly complains are incident to the life of a Minister, to be somewhat inadequate, and to be explanations which invite that cross-examination which is so painful both to him and to the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack. These explanations were demanded before the speech of Mr. Chamberlain. It would not have been in human nature if the noble Duke had not referred to the speech

of Mr. Chamberlain; it would not have been in human nature if those other noble Lords opposite who have spoken, who were dealt with so drastically in the new bag-and-baggage policy of the right hon. Member for Birmingham, had not referred to that speech. It has, I think, been read more or less perfectly several times this evening. It was not unnatural that they should put two and two together and regard the whole circumstances of the case of the Government at this moment as more sinister and suspicious than they have been at any moment even of its variegated career.

Was it wonderful, with apologies such as I have detailed, with the well-known mastery of the right hon. Member for Birmingham over the caucus, that there should have been some fear lest a Colonial Conference should be transformed into a caucus for the purpose of influencing a general election which would immediately follow? It is all very well for the noble Marquess and others to express a virtuous indignation at any such ideas being imputed to them; but we live in strange times, we have seen strange things, we do not walk in the Garden of Eden, we have eaten of the tree of knowledge. Therefore I confess it is not wonderful that those noble Lords who are anxious to remain in the Unionist Party, and also noble Lords on this side of the House who are solicitous to know exactly where they stand with regard to the colonial policy of the Government, should wish to subject the matter to severe cross-examination.

May I speak for a moment of another interest which seems somewhat neglected in these political bickerings? Is there not an interest which is being constantly appealed to, but which is in very serious danger both from the debates which take place and from the inconsiderate and reckless action of the Government and of Mr. Chamberlain—I mean the interest of the British Empire? I confess my gorge rises when I read the speeches which are made on the Party platform accusing those who do not agree with Mr. Chamberlain's views as to mechanically binding the Empire together by a fiscal tariff of being hostile to the British Empire, which has always hitherto existed and prospered on free

and independent lines of development. When I see that this is done when no general election is pending, I confess I am apprehensive of what will take place when a general election is actually raging and upon us. I can conceive no greater disaster to the Empire—yet there are people at this moment who, with rash and heedless hands, would bring about that disaster—and I can conceive no greater disaster, not merely to people within these islands, but to the immeasurable regions outside, than that it should be felt that those regions and peoples outside are being used as pawns in the game of Party politics, a use so contemptible and so loathsome that three or four years ago we should not have conceived it possible.

And let me point out a graver danger still. All indications point to the fact that the country is weary unto death of the present Government, and only desires the opportunity to give it its dismissal. That, perhaps, is a delicate point to touch; but we cannot read the newspapers without seeing the results of elections which, even when they represent a momentary triumph for the Government, would have seemed five years ago like the prognostics of disaster. Can there be a greater danger to the Empire than this, that the name of Empire should be dragged about at the next general election, and attempted to be monopolised by the Party which seems likely to be defeated? For if a new Government should come in, supported, as it would seem, by an almost overwhelming mass of public opinion, it would be represented as returned in opposition to this cry of unity of Empire, falsely and elusively though that cry was raised. I care very little what may be the result. But there is one point on which I am earnestly solicitous, and if my voice could reach beyond this hall and beyond this island, I would endeavour to make it heard. It is that the various parts of the Empire who are being appealed to with almost vulgar pertinacity by the orators of the platform should refuse to lend themselves to this degrading performance and hold aloof so long as it is possible, and I hope it will always be possible, from the play of Party politics in this country.

***LORD AVEBURY** : My Lords, we have heard a good deal this evening about the colonial preference part of the fiscal question, and I will not therefore allude to it ; but I should like to say a word with reference to the policy of retaliation. I regret to hear the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs commit himself so decidedly to a general policy of retaliation. There may be, no doubt, some special cases in which it may be advisable, especially where the favoured-nation treatment is not accorded to us, but a general system of retaliation would be most unfortunate. The recent Blue-book shows that the results of the fiscal wars between France and Switzerland, France and Italy, and Germany and Russia have been disastrous to all concerned. The Franco-Swiss tariff has greatly crippled trade, and Sir E. Monson reported that the Franco-Italian tariff war had been—

“As disastrous as that between France and Switzerland.”

while, as regards the Russo-German conflict, Mr. Buchanan, our Secretary at the Embassy, says—

“The lesson there learnt may help to remind both countries of the loss which such a war entails.”

We cannot expect to promote free trade abroad by adopting protection at home. High duties would not enable us to break down foreign tariffs. France has tried it and failed ; Germany has tried it and failed ; the United States has tried it and failed. Indeed, we have tried it ourselves, and, as Mr. Gladstone said—

“We did not advance free trade one inch.”

Moreover, if protectionist countries do secure any advantage we share it with them under the most-favoured-nation clause. Protectionist countries injure themselves more than us by their policy. It tends to shut them out of neutral markets. But for protection the German and American manufacturers would be much more formidable rivals. A return to protection on our part would have no effect in breaking down the duties of foreign countries ; and if our duties were high they would be disastrous to our commerce and manufactures. If retaliation were really to be adopted as the

policy of the Government, men of business would have to choose between sacrificing the Party and sacrificing the trade and commerce of the country. I sincerely trust we shall not be placed in so painful a position.

REAFFORESTATION IN IRELAND.

LORD CASTLETOWN : My Lords, I rise to ask (1) What steps the Department of Agriculture in Ireland have taken to carry out the work of reafforestation in that country on an adequate scale ; (2) what sum is available annually for that purpose and at the disposal of the Department of Agriculture, and upon what basis that sum has been calculated ; (3) what area of land has been planted by the Department since its commencement of office. Further, what existing plantations or high forests have been acquired by purchase or otherwise, also stating (a) the mode of acquisition ; (b) their approximate areas respectively ; (c) how they are now administered ; (4) what sums have been paid out as an investment of capital, in addition to expenditure out of income for current outgoings, for the purposes embraced in Question 3, or otherwise for the advancement of afforestation since the Department came into office. I wish to supplement these Questions with a very few remarks. I think it is fairly clear that large schemes of afforestation would be profitable in Ireland, and to a certain extent are necessary, especially having regard to the fact that the Land Act of 1903 has placed it in the power of trustees to acquire land for afforestation, or to preserve woods that have already been created by proprietors. It has been conclusively proved that in Germany and France the State forests, or communal forests, have proved very lucrative and useful, and have had the effect of keeping the population in the country. In the latter direction the work of reafforestation would be of great value in Ireland ; it might have the same effect in stemming excessive emigration. Though the Department of Agriculture has undoubtedly done a great deal of very good work, especially agricultural work, in many parts of Ireland, I do not think,

however good the will may be of those at the head of that Department, that they have either the means or the power to do what has been done in Germany and France on a larger scale, and what has proved profitable in those countries. I would, therefore, like to ask the noble Marquess what power the Department has at its disposal.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, I know full well the great interest which my noble friend takes in everything connected with Ireland, and especially in agriculture, and he has been prominent in putting forward admirably-considered views on the subject of afforestation. There are parts of Ireland where plantation and afforestation have taken place and where the land is consequently of considerable value, while there are other parts, but a very short distance removed from these, where there has been no planting or afforestation, and the land is barren. I mention the fact merely to show how greatly I sympathise with the noble Lord's view, and how much I think Ireland might benefit if some such scheme as he has in his mind were carried out.

The noble Lord has stated clearly what he desires to know, and I will reply to him categorically. In reply to his first Question I have to state that the steps taken by the Department of Agriculture in connection with the reafforestation of Ireland comprise (a) the establishment of a school of practical forestry for the training of Irishmen to undertake whatever planting may, in future, be decided upon by central or local authorities, or by private individuals; (b) the making of provision for the purchase by county committees, and the distribution at cost price to private individuals, of forest and other trees; (c) negotiation for the purchase by a county council as trustee, under Section 4 of the Irish Land Act, 1903, of an area suitable for planting, as an illustration of what might be effected by a local authority in this direction. The noble Lord next asks what sum is available annually for reafforestation

and at the disposal of the Department of Agriculture, and upon what basis that sum has been calculated. No special annual Vote is set aside for forestry. The Department, with the concurrence of the Agricultural Board, have hitherto spent out of their endowment fund whatever sums have been found necessary for forestry operations.

In reply to the third Question put to me by the noble Lord, I have to say that a demonstration area of about fifteen acres was planted last season. The existing plantations acquired comprise those on the Coolgreany Estate, county Wexford, and small patches on the Avondale Estate, county Wicklow. The former was acquired from the Estates Commissioners under Section 4 of the Purchase of Land Act, 1903, and the latter was purchased direct from the late owner. The Coolgreany Woods have an area of about 240 acres; the Avondale Estate consists of about 3,700 acres, a large part of which is unsuitable for planting, and will be sold to the tenants; the remainder, about 600 acres, will, in time, be planted by the apprentices attending the forestry school. Both these areas are administered directly by the Department of Agriculture. In reply to the noble Lord's final Question, the only capital sum invested in connection with forestry is the purchase price of the Avondale Estate—namely, £9,750, a sum which will be reduced by the contemplated resale of the tenanted land.

LORD CASTLETOWN: I beg to thank the noble Marquess for the Answers he has given to my Questions. They explain, to a certain extent, what has been done by the Department of Agriculture, and as I happen to be going into the whole of the matter with friends in Ireland who are deeply interested in it, I may possibly have further Questions to put at a later date.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: The Irish Government will, I am sure, be very pleased to give the noble Lord any information he may desire.

House adjourned at a quarter past
Seven o'clock till To-morrow,
a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 5th June, 1905.

—
The House met at Two of the Clock.
—

MR. SPEAKER'S ABSENCE.

The House being met, the Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of Mr. Speaker, owing to continued indisposition.

Whereupon Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, the Chairman of Ways and Means, proceeded to the Table, and, after Prayers, took the Chair as Deputy-Speaker, pursuant to the Standing Order.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Barrymore Estate Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

SUBSTITUTED BILLS [LORDS] (PETITION FOR BILL).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of

Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the following Bill, introduced pursuant to the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, and which the Chairman of Ways and Means had directed to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have been complied with, viz.:—Wemyss Dock [Lords].

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 17) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

Caledonian Railway Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

Dublin United Tramways Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Lantour's Divorce Bill [Lords]; Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Midland Railway Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

North Eastern Railway Bill (King's Consent signified). Read the third time, and passed.

Bootle Corporation Bill; London County Council (General Powers) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [Lords]; Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords]; Leven's Patent Bill [Lords]; Nottingham Corporation Bill [Lords]; Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Tees Valley Water Board Bill [Lords]; University College, London (Transfer), Bill [Lords]; Weaver Navigation Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

Nine Mile Point Railway Bill. Order [18th April] for Committee read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(Mr. Caldwell.)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

London Government Scheme (Hackney and Edmonton Unions) Bill. Reported, without Amendment [Scheme confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time upon Thursday, 22nd June.

London County Council (Money) Bill; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. Bill to be read the third time.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill, without Amendment.

Morley Corporation Bill; Brentwood Gas Bill; North Sussex Gas Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; Croydon Corporation Bill; Aberdare Urban District Council Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to include Bribery amongst

Extradition Crimes." [Extradition Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise new gasworks and remove the existing works; to construct sewerage works; to acquire lands for public improvements; to provide a Pump Room and Baths, and generally to confer further powers on the Urban District Council of Matlock Bath and Scarthin Nick in regard to the local government of their district." [Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Urban District Council of Llandrindod Wells to make further provision with regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the district; and for other purposes." [Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Urban District Council of Littlehampton to purchase the ferry rights over the River Arun at Littlehampton; and to construct a bridge over that river; and for other purposes." [Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise agreements between the Metropolitan Electric Supply Company, Limited, and the Acton Urban District Council with respect to the supply of electrical energy by the company to the district council; and to confer further powers on the company." [Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Blackpool to widen Lytham Road; to construct additional tramways; to extend their powers in regard to the supply of sea water; to make further provision in regard to their loans; and for other purposes." [Blackpool Improvement Bill [Lords.]

And also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to make the Township of Formby, in the county of Lancaster, a separate urban district; to confirm an agreement

relating to the transfer of property and liabilities; to confer powers upon the Urban District Council in relation to the seashore; and for other purposes." [Formby Township Bill [Lords].]

Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [Lords]; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [Lords]; Blackpool Improvement Bill [Lords]; Formby Township Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Fife and Angus, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Govan, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).

Petition from Barnsley, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC LOCAL VETO (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Two Petitions from Dundee, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SINGH, MAHARAJAH MADHAVA.

Petition from Hyderabad, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 8th May; *Mr. Lloyd Morgan*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 189.]

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the county of Middlesex rearranging certain Polling Districts

in the Hornsey Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF SOUTHAMPTON).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the county of Southampton altering certain Polling Districts in the Andover Parliamentary Division [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF WARWICK).

Copy presented, of Order made by the County Council of the county of Warwick altering certain Polling Districts in the various Parliamentary Divisions of the county [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).

Copy presented, of the Postal Order (Colonial) Amendment (No. 3) Regulations, 1905, dated 22nd May, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Copy presented, of Statistical Tables for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION ACCOUNT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1898.

Copy presented, of Return showing the total payments into and out of the Local Taxation (Scotland) Account for the financial year 1904-5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PARISH MEDICAL OFFICERS (SCOTLAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 18th May; *Mr. Charles Douglas*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 190.]

FEE FUND (HOUSE OF LORDS).

Account presented, of the Fee Fund of the House of Lords from 1st April, 1904, to 31st March, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SINKING FUNDS.

Account presented, of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, showing the amount received and applied in the year ended 31st March, 1905, in respect of the Old and New

Sinking Funds [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 191.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 31st May, 1905, declaring that William Thirkell, Rural Postman, General Post Office, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL EXPENDITURE AND MERCANTILE MARINE (GREAT BRITAIN, ETC.).

Return ordered, "showing aggregate Naval Expenditure on Seagoing Force; aggregate Revenue; aggregate tonnage of Mercantile Marine; annual clearances of Shipping in the Foreign Trade; annual clearances of Shipping in the Coasting Trade; annual value of Imports by Sea, including Bullion and Specie; and annual value of Exports by Sea, including Bullion and Specie, of various countries, exclusive of China and South American Republics, but including British Self-governing Colonies, for the year 1904 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 342, of session 1904)." — (*Sir John Colomb.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Postal Deliveries in the Maudabawn District, County Cavan.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG (Cavan, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the inhabitants of Drumbrade and parts of Lisagoan, in the Maudabawn delivery district of county Cavan, have delivery of letters only three days in the week; and whether, in view of the fact that inconvenience and loss is experienced in many ways, especially in receiving debt notices to which there is no time to reply, immediate steps will be taken to authorise a daily delivery.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am not acquainted with the particulars as regards the delivery at the places referred to, but I will make inquiry and communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Delay of Mails at Draperstown.

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that, owing to alterations made in the duties of the rural postman who collects and carries the mails between Sixtowns, Strand and Draperstown, he has frequently been unable to collect the letters at Strand and bring them to Draperstown in time for the 4.15. p.m. train, and that in consequence the letters have been delayed overnight at Draperstown; and whether he will inquire into the matter and give directions that it be set right.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) I am not aware of the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member, but I will direct the surveyor of the district to inquire into the matter.

Appointment of Successful Candidates at London Sorters' Examination, October, 1904.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether any of the successful candidates at the London sorters' examination, held in October, 1904, have yet been called up for duty; and, if so, when the remainder will be called on to take up work.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) Out of the whole number of eighty candidates declared successful at the examination for sorterships in London, which was held in October, 1904, twenty-six have been appointed or are about to be appointed, and seven have declined appointment. The appointment of the rest has been retarded by an unforeseen dearth of vacancies, but there is reason to hope that it may not be very long delayed.

Meetings on Belfast Customs-house Steps.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the remarks made by Mr. Hodder, R.M., in convicting a man called Trew at Belfast on Friday for indecent behaviour, as to the character of the religious meetings held at the Custom-house steps in Belfast every Sunday, and the language used thereat; and whether, in view of his statement that the present system should be put

an end to, he can state what action the Government proposes to take.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have read a newspaper report of the resident magistrate's remarks, in the course of which he is stated to have said that it would be a credit to the city and its authorities if the state of things referred to could be put an end to. The defendant was fined 40s. and costs or a month's imprisonment for the offence of indecent behaviour on the occasion alluded to. The Government will continue to enforce the law.

Doctors and Dentists struck off the Register.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in view of the fact that during recent years twenty names have been struck off the Medical Register for infamous conduct in a professional respect, and twelve restored, whilst out of six names removed from the Dentist's Register for a similar cause one has been restored, will he state the nature of the offences originally preferred in the case of those whose names have been restored.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I could hardly specify the offences without identifying the persons implicated; and, as they have been restored to the register, this would merely give unnecessary pain to individuals without serving any useful public service.

Publication of Expense of Lunacy Return.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Return granted in 1904 relative to the Expense of Lunacy is yet ready, and when it will be published.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) This Return, the preparation of which has been exceptionally difficult, is now in the printer's hands, and will, I hope, be published shortly.

Wheat Corners and Gambling in Options—Suggested International Conference.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he has any official information showing that the reduction on imports of wheat and flour from the United States

and Canada to the United Kingdom for 1904, in comparison with the previous year, can be traced to the artificial high prices ruling in the United States due to the wheat corners in that country owing to the option and future gambling system prevailing during 1904; and whether, in view of the influence of such gambling operations in regard to food supplies upon honest trading and the cost of food, he will communicate with the President of the United States, suggesting an International Conference upon the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) The Answer to both the points raised in the hon. Member's Question is in the negative.

Income of the Trust for Education in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will grant a Return showing the income of the Trust for Education in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland for each year during the last six years, and the mode of expenditure of such income, indicating the amount expended for bursaries, and the annual grants made to schools, with the names of such schools.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The information desired by the hon. Member is contained in full in the biennial reports of the Governors of the Trust for Education in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, copies of which he will, no doubt, be able to obtain on application to the secretary of the Trust, C. C. Nisbet, Esq., W.S., 11, Alva Street, Edinburgh.

Physical Deterioration—Issue of Leaflets on Ventilation and Bringing up of Children.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland has yet considered the expediency of issuing to parochial medical officers, sanitary inspectors, and inspectors of poor, leaflets containing the opinions of the Committee on Physical Deterioration relative to ventilation and the bringing up of young children, with a view to the dissemination of information on these subjects.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) The Local Government Board are taking steps to ascertain how far it is practicable to issue leaflets on the lines suggested by the hon. Member.

Publication of Deer Forest Return.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state when the Deer Forest Return, which was granted on the 20th February last, will be issued.

(Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.) The Return is in course of being completed, and I hope to be able to lay it on the Table at an early date.

Postal Facilities in the Clogher Valley District, County Tyrone.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the defective postal facilities in the Clogher Valley district, county Tyrone, necessitates the extensive use of the telegraph by business men which might be avoided if letters could be answered on the day of their delivery, and, as the existing railway service is suitable for a supplementary mail *via* Greenore, will he reconsider his decision.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) I have within the last few weeks fully considered the question of improving the postal service in the Clogher Valley district, and, as I informed the hon. Member in my letter of the 8th ultimo, I found that the cost of the existing service was so high that no further expense upon it was warranted. I regret that I am unable to modify that decision.

Appointments to Vacancies in Bristol Telegraph Department.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the circular issued in October last directing postmasters not to delay the filling up of vacancies existing among the supervising positions in their offices, he can state the date upon which the three vacancies among the superior appointments of the Bristol Telegraph Department will be filled.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) There has been no avoidable delay in filling the vacancies referred to in the hon. Member's Question. The matter is still under consideration, and I hope to be able to fill the vacancies before long, but some time may yet elapse before I am able to select the officers best qualified for promotion.

Civil Service Age Retirement Rules.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if, in view of the fact that, prior to the Order in Council of 29th November, 1898, compulsory retirement at sixty-five applied only to Civil servants drawing, or placed on scales of, salaries in excess of second division clerks, officers who entered the service anterior to that date, 29th November, 1898, and compelled to retire at sixty on pensions less than a third of their retiring salary, can be allowed the relief extended by Treasury Minute, dated 30th March, 1892, which grants a gratuity, not exceeding one year's salary, to those compulsorily retired at sixty-five whose pensions are less than one-half of their final salary

(Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.) I am unable to adopt the alteration suggested by my hon. friend.

Local Authorities and Motor-Car Speed Limit.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the names of the forty-nine local authorities who have asked for a speed limit to be fixed under the Motor-Car Act; what are the names of the seventeen authorities who withdrew their applications; the reasons for such withdrawal; where the twelve local inquiries were held, and the two applications for a speed limit granted.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) The number of local authorities, under the Motor-Car Act, 1903, who have made application in pursuance of Sections 8 and 9 of the Act, is forty-seven, and inquiries have now been held in thirteen cases. The names of these authorities are given in the following list. The mark * against the name of any authority shows that an inquiry has been held with regard to their application.

The County Councils of—

Anglesey	Norfolk
Cumberland	Parts of Holland
Denbigh	Parts of Kesteven
Hunts	Radnor
Isle of Ely	West Sussex
*Middlesex	

*The Common Council of the City of London.

The Town Councils of—

*Beverley	Maidstone
Bexhill	Mossley
Blackpool	Newbury
Bradford	*Newport (Mon.)
*Bury	Oxford
Chipping Wycombe	Preston
Colchester	St. Albans
Deal	St. Helens
*Dover	Stockport
Ealing	Stoke-on-Trent
Gillingham	*Todmorden
Guildford	*Torquay
Harrogate	Wallsend
Huddersfield	Warwick
*Kingston on Thames	*Whitehaven
*Leeds	*Winchester
*Leigh	Worthing
Longton	

The names of the seventeen authorities who withdrew their applications are—

The County Councils of—

Cumberland	Parts of Holland
Isle of Ely	Parts of Kesteven

The Town Councils of—

Blackpool	Preston
Bradford	St. Helens
Deal	Stockport
Gillingham	Stoke on Trent
Longton	Wallsend
Maidstone	Worthing
Mossley	

I am not in a position to give the reasons for the withdrawal of the applications in these cases. Orders were issued imposing a limit of five miles an hour in respect of specified parts of highways in the county of Middlesex and the borough of Beverley.

Net Receipts of Coal Tax.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the net amount received from the coal tax at each shipping port in the United Kingdom in each year ending 31st March, 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1905.

(Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.) The net amounts received from the coal tax at each shipping port in the United Kingdom in each year ending 31st March, 1902, 1903, 1904, and 1905, were as follows—

Port.	1901-2.	1902-3.	1903-4.	1904-5.
	£	£	£	£
Bristol Channel Ports :—				
Bristol - - - -	218	955	833	597
Cardiff - - - -	464,790	611,685	646,784	593,587
Gloucester - - - -	7	10	—	33
Llanelly - - - -	7,782	9,645	9,314	9,226
Milford - - - -	45	44	21	—
Newport - - - -	95,143	133,852	146,195	145,911
Port Talbot (included with Swansea prior to 1904-5)	—	—	—	33,857
Swansea - - - -	87,890	110,467	99,784	67,712
Total - - -	655,875	866,658	902,931	850,923

Port.	1901-2.	1902-3.	1903-4.	1904-5.
	£	£	£	£
North Western Ports :—				
Barrow - - - -	20	—	16	5
Carlisle - - - -	20	—	5	—
Chester - - - -	30	21	10	13
Fleetwood - - - -	134	55	39	4
Liverpool - - - -	17,278	23,715	16,056	11,985
Manchester - - - -	3,171	5,210	4,070	4,765
Maryport - - - -	3	49	57	93
Preston - - - -	121	31	36	79
Runcorn - - - -	820	143	179	118
Whitehaven - - - -	7	4	—	—
Workington - - - -	4	7	—	4
Total - - - -	21,608	29,235	20,468	17,066
North Eastern Ports :—				
Amble (included with Blyth prior to 1903-4) - -	—	—	14,267	16,320
Blyth - - - -	67,000	110,971	96,251	98,265
Hartlepool - - - -	12,476	25,716	26,705	28,694
Middlesbrough - - - -	2,276	2,637	2,269	3,204
Newcastle, North and South Shields - - - -	190,229	371,499	402,981	408,164
Scarborough - - - -	2	—	—	—
Stockton - - - -	12	60	51	—
Sunderland - - - -	44,448	93,848	103,315	115,200
Total - - - -	316,443	604,731	645,839	669,847

Port.	1901-2.	1902-3.	1903-4.	1904-5.
	£	£	£	£
Humber Ports :—				
Goole - - - - -	17,769	27,867	27,831	29,264
Grimsby - - - - -	20,005	50,976	43,857	49,443
Hull - - - - -	42,899	68,540	68,469	78,565
Total - - -	80,673	147,383	140,157	157,272
Other Ports on the East Coast :—				
Boston - - - - -	2,849	4,886	4,327	5,337
Dover - - - - -	—	—	—	7
Ipswich - - - - -	—	—	—	93
London - - - - -	3,931	1,896	2,655	5,516
Lynn - - - - -	3,413	3,901	3,487	3,965
Wisbech - - - - -	201	145	98	6
Yarmouth - - - - -	8	2	—	—
Total - - -	10,402	10,830	10,567	14,924
Other English Ports :—				
Dartmouth - - - - -	—	—	—	5
Exeter - - - - -	—	5	—	—
Plymouth - - - - -	56	76	66	95
Poole - - - - -	4	—	—	—
Portsmouth - - - - -	10	5	—	21
Southampton - - - - -	15	1	17	8
Weymouth - - - - -	13	5	—	—
Total - - -	98	92	83	129
Total England -	1,085,099	1,658,929	1,720,045	1,710,161

Port.	1901-2.	1902-3.	1903-4.	1904-5.
Ports on the East Coast of Scotland :—	£	£	£	£
Aberdeen - - - -	—	—	—	3
Alloa - - - -	9,934	11,334	9,581	10,981
Borrowstoness - - -	13,069	24,282	23,638	23,555
Dundee - - - -	172	25	84	25
Grangemouth - - -	43,324	54,048	56,459	53,405
Granton - - - -	3,420	5,337	5,502	4,065
Kirkcaldy (including Burnt-island and Methil) - -	81,136	129,313	126,119	146,859
Kirkwall - - - -	2	2	4	5
Leith - - - -	16,313	25,264	27,142	26,935
Lerwick - - - -	—	—	—	1
Montrose - - - -	—	—	—	1
Peterhead - - - -	1	1	2	1
Wick - - - -	—	—	—	1
Total - - -	167,371	249,606	248,531	265,837
Ports on the West Coast of Scotland :—				
Ardrossan - - - -	3,413	3,740	2,470	1,636
Ayr - - - -	560	1,125	348	160
Glasgow - - - -	47,766	70,765	73,912	70,905
Greenock - - - -	2,093	1,608	1,663	1,312
Irvine - - - -	495	91	46	24
Troon - - - -	4,909	5,903	4,638	2,730
Total - - -	59,236	83,232	83,077	76,767
Total Scotland -	226,607	332,838	331,608	342,604

Port.	1901-2.	1902-3.	1903-4.	1904-5.
	£	£	£	£
Ports on the Coast of Ireland :—				
Belfast - - - -	—	—	—	8
Limerick - - - -	—	—	—	1
Total Ireland -	—	—	—	9
Total United Kingdom -	1,311,706	1,991,767	2,051,653	2,052,774

Delay in Commencing Works at Poulduff Pier, County Wexford.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in commencing the works at Poulduff Pier, county Wexford; and if he will state the date on which they will be begun.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) A tender for the execution of the proposed works at Poulduff Pier has been accepted, and the legal documents in connection with the contract are being prepared. The date on which operations will be started rests with the contractor, who is bound to have them completed within a fixed period.

Salaries of Manual Instructresses in Ireland.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the operation of Rule 155 of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, under which the salaries of manual instructresses are reduced if the attendance of girls is less than twenty, and in calculating attendance no allowance is made for boys, although the instructresses are required to teach boys as well as girls; and whether, seeing that work-mistresses who were paid £12 a year for two hours work a day under the old system,

having now qualified by study and examination to act as manual instructresses, are often called in to work five hours a day for £16 a year, he will direct the attention of the Commissioners of National Education to the effects of this rule with a view to its amendment.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The considerations raised in this Question have already engaged the attention of the Commissioners, and will not be lost sight of.

Foul-Brood amongst Bees in Ireland.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of the resolution passed by the Roscommon County Council, showing that foul-brood or bee pest, which has spread rapidly throughout Ireland within the last few years, threatens to destroy one of the most profitable of the minor industries of the country, and that permissive measures tried during several years by the Congested Districts Board for Ireland, and now being tried under the sanction of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, are powerless to cope with the disease, and urging the need of legislation to enable county councils to deal compulsorily with the pest; and, if so, what action does he propose to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The resolution has been received. The Department's bee-keeping scheme, which has been adopted by seventeen counties in Ireland, affords facilities for the eradication of foul-brood, which, if properly used, will, it is believed, render it unnecessary to have recourse to further legislation. Until this scheme has had a full trial, the question of legislation will not be entertained. The Department have received no authentic information that the disease has spread, as stated.

Annual Revision of Valuation Lists—Resolution of Roscommon County Council.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of the resolution passed by the Roscommon County Council, asking the Commissioner of Valuation to forward the valuation lists for the county in the end of December in each year, and urging that, if necessary, the annual revision could commence earlier; and, if so, what action does he propose to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The date by which the revised valuation lists must be issued is 1st March, as fixed by statutory Order; but, in order to meet the wishes of county councils, an arrangement was made some years ago by which the lists are issued unofficially to the county rating authorities a month earlier, namely, on 1st February. The date (15th June) by which the list of cases to be revised must be sent in could not be changed without legislation, and great inconvenience would be caused to the rating bodies by fixing an earlier date. It is not practicable to shorten the time occupied in making the annual revision.

Promotion in the Irish Agricultural Department.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the reasons that influenced the Agricultural Department in representing that no ground existed for granting the independent inquiry publicly called for into the method of promotion

of the Department's officials, having regard to the treatment accorded to a section of the clerks in the Veterinary Branch.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have already informed the hon. Member that I do not consider that there is any ground whatever for an inquiry.

Irish Asylum Service—Insubordination of Attendant M'Keough.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will give the date on which the attendant in charge of Maurice Sheehan entered the asylum service; who was the responsible official who examined the window bars, and on what date, and will he give a copy of the report sent to this official; whether he is aware that when the patient Feeley, who got through the bars on 28th March, 1902, and was severely injured, told the head attendant and the doctor that it was through the bars he got out, that the head attendant immediately told M'Keough; that M'Keough ascertained on 29th March, 1902, in the presence of Dr. M'Combe and the acting head attendant, that it was true; will he say why alteration was not considered necessary; and whether, seeing that Attendant M'Keough was senior trades attendant in charge, and was under close supervision to compel him to produce work, and that M'Keough holds all the communications that passed between the inspectors and his solicitor, in which no act of insubordination or neglect of duty was mentioned, he will now state the acts of insubordination, with nature and dates, and the particular duty that M'Keough did not satisfactorily discharge.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I informed the hon. Member on 26th ultimo † that this man's dismissal was in no way connected with the escape of convict Sheehan. So far, therefore, as the first part of the present question is concerned, it appears to be unnecessary to add anything to the reply already given. Three inquiries on oath were held by the inspectors of lunatic asylums into the conduct of Attendant M'Keough,

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlvi., 1533.

at each of which he was afforded full opportunity of defending himself. As a result of the third inquiry, he was by direction of the Lord-Lieutenant called upon to resign on the grounds of insubordinate conduct and failure to satisfactorily discharge his duties. He refused to resign, and was dismissed. The evidence adduced satisfied the Lord-Lieutenant that the charges were well founded, and I am not prepared, in reply to a Question, to enter into a review of that decision, or to set forth the details of the evidence.

Cootehill (County Cavan) Union Infirmary.

MR. SAMUEL YOUNG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the suggested alterations to the Cootehill, county Cavan, Union Infirmary, whether he can state if any public inquiry was made into the causes of death in the four cases referred to in Dr. Biggens' report; whether he has ascertained that some of the deaths were due to old age, and that in one case the medical officer operated, though a local doctor of long experience refused to administer ether; whether any petition for alterations was received purporting to come from seven electoral divisions; and, if so, what local authorities approved of it and by how many ratepayers it was signed; what is the total amount spent in improvements during the three years ending March 31st, 1905; and whether the Local Government Board's recommendations for further expenditure will be suspended pending the Report of the Viceregal Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Local Government Board have referred this Question to the clerk of the Cootehill Union, who has furnished the following information:—No public inquiry was held into the causes of death in the cases referred to. The deaths were certified as having been due to septicæmia following operation. None of them were due to old age, and no local doctor refused to administer an anæsthetic in any of the cases. The only objection in writing received by the guardians in the matter of the suggested improvement was a protest by one of

the guardians, representing a district electoral division in the county Monaghan portion of the union. No improvements were carried out in the infirmary during the period stated other than those effected by the house carpenter of that institution. At a special meeting of the guardians held on the 17th April last, a resolution was passed postponing the carrying out of the alterations pending the Report of the Poor Law Commission. As was stated in reply to a previous Question put on the 18th ultimo,† the Local Government Board will communicate with the new board of guardians which will shortly come into office on the subject of the proposed improvements.

Irish National Teachers' Pensions.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of Irish national teachers, men and women respectively, who are now on full pension, and the average pension for each sex; the number, men and women, now on disablement pensions, and the average as before; and the average pension for all, men and women respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Number of teachers on full pension—Men, 430; women, 409. Average amount of pension—Men, £49 5s.; women, £35 10s. Number on disablement pension—Men, 25; women, 22. †Average amount of disablement pension—Men, £5 12s. 6d.; women, £4 17s. 7d. Average pension for all teachers—Men, £38 4s. 7d.; women, £28 8s. 6d.

Population of Southern Nigeria—Import of Spirits.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can say what is the present population of Southern Nigeria; and what number of gallons of spirits are annually imported into that country.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlvi., 744.

‡ In addition to these pensions, disabled teachers receive a cash payment equal at least to one-fourth of the gratuity which was payable under the Superseded Rules, and the pensions can be commuted after one year for three times the amount of the cash payment.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*)
No Census has ever been taken in Southern Nigeria, and any estimate of the population would be purely conjectural. The number of gallons of trade spirits imported into the country in 1903 was 1,711,076 gallons.

**Southern Nigeria—Military Expeditions
—India-Rubber Industry.**

MR. COGHILL: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any military expeditions have been recently sent into Southern Nigeria; and whether any complaints have been received from the natives with regard to the way in which the india-rubber industry is carried on, or that they are subjected to a system of forced labour.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*)
No organised opposition to the administration of Southern Nigeria has been experienced since the Aro Expedition in 1901, and consequently there have not been since then any military expeditions in the protectorate. A series of patrols, consisting as a rule of small detachments of the Southern Nigeria Regiment with civilian officers attached, are sent through different parts of the country every year for the purpose of maintaining order, and the patrols have on some occasions met with opposition, but this has been of a purely local nature. No complaints have reached us from the natives of the protectorate as to the way in which the rubber industry is carried on, or that they are subjected to a system of forced labour. Under the Government regulations persons are prohibited from collecting rubber without a licence. Where the holder of a licence is other than a native of the district, he is required to pay a commuted royalty, half of which, in cases where the rubber is collected from native lands, goes to the natives and the other to the Government. Natives in receipt of such royalties are required to maintain nurseries for rearing rubber plants, but are not required to spend on such nurseries more than the amount received by them as royalties. Neither in this arrangement nor in any of the other regulations is there anything which can properly be described as forced labour.

Withholding of Salaries of Chiefs of Addo and Pokira by District Commissioner of Badagry.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any official Report showing that the District Commissioner of Badagry withheld the stipends of the Chiefs of Addo and Pokira because it was believed at first that they had been instrumental in stopping the spirit trade in their towns; and, if so, whether this action of the District Commissioner received the sanction of His Majesty's Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.*)
No, Sir, but I will inquire.

Harbour Dues on Material for Public Works in India and the Colonies.

SIR ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that as a result of his reception on the 6th March, 1888, of a deputation representative of port authorities on the subject of charging harbour dues on certain goods upon which the Government were claiming exemption under Section 28 of the Harbours, Docks, and Piers Clauses Act, 1847, the wishes of the harbour authorities were conceded so far as coal and materials for Indian State railways were concerned, and having regard to the continuing pecuniary loss in their revenue sustained yearly by harbour authorities, he will further extend the exemption from payment granted in the year 1888, by placing every description of material for public works in India and the Colonies on the same footing with respect to payment of harbour dues as coal and materials for the Indian State railways.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)
I have consulted the Departments concerned in the inquiry of my hon. friend, they are the India Office and the Colonial Office, and I am advised that in their judgment it would not be expedient to extend the concession made in 1888 by placing all descriptions of material for public works in India and the Colonies on the same footing with respect to payment of harbour dues as coal and materials for State railways.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Portsmouth Boom Defence Experiments.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many journalists and photographers were allowed to witness the recent experiments in boom defence at Portsmouth.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): No permits were issued to journalists or photographers to witness the boom defence experiments, but no one could be prevented from seeing generally what took place. The whole of the windows of the houses overlooking the harbour, and the beach, were crowded with people.

Naval Discipline.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the practice of the Board of Admiralty with regard to the enforcement of Section 16 of The Naval Discipline Act, 1866, which enacts that every person subject to the Act who shall strike, or with any weapon attempt to strike, or draw, or lift up, any weapon against his superior officer, shall be punished with death, with penal servitude, or with such other punishment as is aftermentioned in the Act; do the Board of Admiralty hold that they have a dispensing power with regard to this section; and, if so, is such power exercised as well with regard to men as to officers.

MR. PRETYMAN: Such an offence is a capital offence, and can only be triable and punishable by Court-martial. The Admiralty have discretionary power whether to appoint a Court martial or not, and the question would be decided in each case on its own merits, irrespective of the rank of the offender.

The "Kent" Ragging Case.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty has the attention of the Board of Admiralty been drawn to the fact that Captain Douglas A. Gamble, M.V.O., who has been superseded and placed on half pay

in consequence of a midshipman having shot his superior officer in the gun room of H.M.S. "Kent" on May 2nd, knew absolutely nothing of these proceedings; is it the fact that the sub-lieutenant, as senior executive officer in the gun room, is, by the King's Regulations, responsible for the prevention of all irregularities therein; and, in reference to the statement of His Majesty's Government that, besides the supersession of the captain, the others concerned were suitably dealt with, will he say how the sub-lieutenant was dealt with.

MR. PRETYMAN: Every captain is held responsible for all that occurs on board the ship he commands. The reply to the second part of the Question is yes, subject to the captain's orders. The sub-lieutenant concerned was severely censured.

Sales of South African War Stores—Report of Sir William Butler's Committee.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the suspension of two colonels, as a result of the Report of Sir William Butler's inquiry into the waste of public money in the disposal of war stores in South Africa, is to be accompanied by any action or statement as to the responsibility of any superior military officers, or whether no such responsibility in fact exists; and what further action is contemplated by His Majesty's Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): Certain officers have been named in the Report of Sir William Butler's Committee as being, in the opinion of the Committee, directly connected with the transactions which are impugned. These officers have been relieved of their duty by the Army Council. They include two officers holding the rank of colonel. The Report itself has been referred to the Treasury Solicitor, and is being considered by him. The Report and evidence will also be referred to the Judge Advocate-General, who will advise as to the nature of the offence, if any, of the persons named in it; whether any further

inquiry is necessary; and, if so, before what tribunal such an inquiry can appropriately take place; and what charges, if any, can be preferred against the persons named. The evidence on which the Report is based has not yet reached the Army Council, and has, consequently, not yet been communicated to the Treasury Solicitor and the Judge Advocate-General. It is obvious, therefore, that these officials will not be in a position to advise the Army Council until they have received, and have had an opportunity of considering, the evidence. If it should appear that any other officers are concerned in, or are responsible for, any acts or omissions which an examination of the evidence shows to be irregular, those officers will also be relieved of duty pending further inquiry. There is undoubtedly a responsibility attaching to the general officer commanding with respect to all expenditure incurred by officers under his command. In some cases this responsibility is technical only, in others it may be substantial. What was the actual nature of the responsibility in this case will be ascertained by the further inquiry which will be necessary. I must, however, remind the House that the Report of the Departmental Committee is not, and cannot be regarded as, a judicial finding; that the evidence on which it is based is not yet in the possession of the War Office; and that the evidence has not been taken upon oath. Under these circumstances, I must deprecate any expression of opinion with regard to any of the persons connected directly or by implication with the transactions which have been condemned by the Committee. An ample opportunity will be given to all persons concerned to state their own case. Meanwhile, until I have received the evidence, and the reports of the Treasury Solicitor and the Judge Advocate-General thereon, I must regard the whole matter as being *sub judice*, and I am unable to make any statement as to what further steps the Army Council may think it necessary to take. I can assure the right hon. Baronet that everything will be done to secure a full and searching inquiry, and, above all, to afford to all persons directly or indirectly incriminated ample opportunity of clearing their characters

from an imputation which the Report of the Committee may seem to suggest.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): Who is the Judge Advocate-General?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Deputy Judge Advocate-General will act in this case.

COLONEL NOLAN: Is there any Judge Advocate-General?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: There is no Judge Advocate-General at present. The appointment is pending, and I hope it will be made very shortly.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): When will this Report be in the possession of the House? It was promised a week ago.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I said every effort should be made to issue it. It is entirely a matter of printing. And may I add I can find no foundation for the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Longford that there was any delay on the part of the War Office in regard to the printing of the evidence. It will be presented the moment it is received from the printers. I can give no other pledge.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): I merely said that representations were made to the War Office that the evidence should be printed from day to day, and added that if that had been done there was no reason why it should not be ready.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Will the evidence be given to *The Times* before the Members get it?

SIR HENRY FOWLER: Has the right hon. Gentleman made any representations regarding this extraordinary delay to Mr. Speaker, who has control of the printing for the House?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not admit there has been extraordinary delay. I cannot trace the correspondence with the War Office to which the hon. Member for South Longford alludes.

MR. BLAKE: The right hon. Gentleman again misunderstands me. I never

said there had been any correspondence. I said representations were made to the representative of the War Office.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): With regard to the two colonels relieved from duty—are they dismissed or suspended?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Neither.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): May we hope to have the Report and evidence before the Motion is made for the adjournment for the holidays?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I will make further inquiries this afternoon.

MR. MACVEAGH: What is the meaning of "relieved from duty"—does it not mean suspended?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No; there is a material difference.

Military Sales Department.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War who is responsible for the establishment in South Africa of the Military Sales Department alluded to at page 236 of the Report on the Army Appropriation Account of the Comptroller and Auditor-General, and when was it established; who was responsible for the conduct of this department; does the responsibility for this department extend beyond the officers of the department itself up to the general officer commanding, and who were the general officers commanding in South Africa when the department was established and during its proceedings up to October, 1902; and is the general officer commanding responsible for the department of the Director of Supplies, who conducted the sales of surplus stores after October, 1902, and in 1903.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Military Sales Department was established in June, 1902, by General Lord Kitchener, who placed the organisation under the charge of Colonel Morgan, of the Army Service Corps. The general officer commanding is responsible for the conduct of this department, as of all others in his command. The general officer commanding is generally responsible, as stated, for

the conduct of the department of the Director of Supplies. The general officer commanding in South Africa when the department was established on June 18th, 1902, was General Lord Kitchener. He was succeeded on June 23rd, 1902, by Lieutenant-General Sir Neville Lyttelton.

The Army.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can now state when he proposes to commence enlistment of the foreign and home-service armies respectively.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War when it is proposed to merge the Militia into the short-service Army; and how are the wishes of the Militia officers and men to be ascertained.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I regret that I am not yet in a position to give the hon. Member any further information in reference to the points raised in these Questions.

MR. LAMBERT: When does the right hon. Gentleman expect to be in a position to give information?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Very shortly, I hope.

War Office and Empire Day.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can explain why the only Government building in Pall Mall not flying the Union Jack on Empire Day was the War Office.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The day mentioned is not one on which the flag is authorised to be flown at the War Office. That is the only public office in Pall Mall.

MR. MACVEAGH: Has the right hon. Gentleman become a Little Englander?

Linked Battalions.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of Paragraph 15, Part II., of Lord Esher's

Report and of the statement of Lord Lansdowne, on July 21st, that the linked-battalion system was doomed, he can now state how long he proposes to continue this organisation; and what measures will be substituted to provide the drafts for the battalions on foreign service.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: As I have explained to the House on previous occasions, until a sufficient number of nine-years men have been recruited to meet the requirements of the drafts for the battalions on service abroad, the present system must remain in force. As soon as the time arrives for establishing large depots the system of supplying drafts by the linked battalion will be gradually discontinued.

The Province of Bengal.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has received any proposals from the Government of India for partitioning the province of Bengal; and, if so, whether he will state what decision has been arrived at upon the subject.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (MR. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The proposals of the Government of India for the reconstruction of the provinces of Bengal and Assam have been received and are under consideration. A decision will be communicated to India very shortly.

The New Indian Loan.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the amount of the new Indian Loan, and for what purpose is it being raised.

MR. BRODRICK: I understand that the Question refers to the Bill of which notice was recently given. The object of the Bill is to enable money to be borrowed, and stock to be created, for railway purposes. There is no intention of borrowing money in the present year under the authority proposed to be given by the Bill, although it is necessary to secure the early passage of the Bill in order to complete certain arrangements.

In accordance with past practice, the amount of borrowing power named in the Bill is sufficient to meet the requirements of the Government of India for some considerable period; and the power will be used only as it is required. The sum named is £20,000,000.

MR. BUCHANAN: When will the Bill be introduced?

MR. BRODRICK: At once.

Crete—Landing of British Troops.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any British troops have been landed in Crete; if so, what is the reason for this action.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (EARL PERCY, Kensington, S.): A battalion of British troops has been landed in Crete to reinforce the detachment stationed in the island. This action has been taken at the request of the High Commissioner, in concert with the other protecting Powers and in accordance with the advice of the Consuls, for the purpose of restoring order and affording protection to the Mussulman inhabitants in the districts disturbed by the recent insurrectionary movement.

Crime in Bristol.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the total number of complaints made to the police in Bristol last year as to offences against the person, offences against property, malicious injuries, forgery, and all other offences; how many prosecutions took place in Courts of summary jurisdiction and in Higher Courts; and how many convictions were obtained.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): These figures will appear in the Annual Criminal Statistics for England and Wales, which are at present in course of preparation.

MR. MACVEAGH: I do not think the figures are given for Bristol. Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire specially as

to the crime in the Chief Secretary's constituency?

[No Answer was returned.]

Workmen's Compensation Act—Payment to Widows.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the great increase of widows who have been compensated under the Workmen's Compensation Act becoming chargeable to the rates, he is prepared to consider the advisability of introducing at an early date a Bill so that further payments be made monthly instead of in a lump sum.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: This matter is dealt with in the Workmen's Compensation Bill which has come down from the House of Lords, and now awaits Second Reading in this House. If the hon. Member will refer to Clause 11 of the Bill he will find that, in accordance with the recommendation of the Departmental Committee which I appointed to inquire into the subject, power is given to the County Court to direct in what manner the compensation due to widows or other dependants is to be paid.

Police and Motor Speeds.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that an automobilist, when travelling between twelve and fourteen miles an hour, was stopped recently by the police, who swore he was going forty-three miles an hour; and whether he will ascertain how such a discrepancy arose.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have no information about this case, and without further details I do not see how I could make any inquiry.

MR. LAMBERT: It was the case cited by the chairman of the Automobile Club in the debate the other night.

Beer Manufacture.

DR. HUTCHINSON (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he is prepared to use the

powers given to him under the Inland Revenue Act of 1888 to forbid the use of those substances in the manufacture of beer which the Department states to be dangerous or injurious to the public health; and is he prepared to give assistance to the introduction of a Bill to compel brewers to state on their casks, bottles, etc., the ingredients used by them in the manufacture of beer.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The powers in question will no doubt be exercised in the future, as they have been in the past, in any case in which the circumstances may seem to require it. The suggestion in the second part of the hon. Member's Question was fully examined by Lord Pembroke's Committee on Beer Materials, and was declared by the Majority Report, signed by five out of six members, to be unadvisable. I am not prepared, therefore, to give assistance to the introduction of such a Bill.

Whisky—Government Guarantees of Age.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Board of Customs and Inland Revenue have received two applications from a firm asking the Inland Revenue Department to guarantee the age of their whisky on the Canadian system; and whether, as this firm deals exclusively in unblended spirits of uniform quality, he will give instructions that their application shall be acceded to.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am aware such applications have been received. It would, however, be quite out of the question to accord to particular firms a system not applicable to the trade as a whole, since it would give such firms an unfair advantage. Unless, therefore, a Government guarantee is to be given to all who apply for it (and that is not possible), it ought not to be given to any.

MR. MACVEAGH: Last week the right hon. Gentleman said this could not be done because most of the whisky was sold blended in this country. Why cannot it be done in Ireland?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Because the trade there is also mainly in blonded spirits of various ages.

MR. MACVEAGH: Not in Ireland.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I think so.

MR. MACVEAGH: No, it is not.

Pauperism in London.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the increase in the pauperism of London, as given in the statement for April last; and whether, seeing that the number of paupers is greater per thousand inhabitants than for any year since 1875, and that the increase is especially among the outdoor paupers, he can state if there is any Return showing how many have recently come to London in expectation of work being found for them.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am aware of the figures as to pauperism in London as given in the statement for April last, which are undoubtedly very unsatisfactory. There is no Return giving the information referred to in the last part of the Question.

Motor-Cars—Speed Regulations by Local Authorities.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what is the reason that a considerable number of applications from local authorities for fixing a speed limit under the Motor-Car Act have remained in abeyance.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The circumstances vary in the several cases which the Local Government Board regard as being in abeyance, but, speaking generally, they are cases in which, although the application has not been withdrawn, the local authority, after having been asked for further information in connection with their application or for their observations in reply to objections received, have let the matter rest.

I am not in possession of their reasons for adopting this course.

MR. LAMBERT: Is it due to the Local Government Board that the matter remains in abeyance?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir. I say it is wholly due to the local authority.

Hertfordshire Boundaries.

SIR CARNE RASCH: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can give any information as to the proposed annexation of ten Essex parishes by Hertfordshire.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The Hertfordshire County Council made a representation to the Local Government Board to the effect that an alteration of the administrative county was desirable so as to include in it the parishes referred to. After a local inquiry had been held, at which the various parties were heard, the Board decided to give effect to the representation, and a Provisional Order was issued accordingly. The Essex County Council have petitioned against the Bill to confirm the Order and the matter will now come before a Select Committee.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): When will the transfer take place?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I cannot say.

SIR CARNE RASCH: Why do you wish to deprive Essex of these parishes?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: That Question could hardly be adequately answered across the floor of the House.

Dominican Sugar Industry.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has the attention of His Majesty's Government been given to the statement in Mr. Vice-Consul Gosling's Report on the Republic of Santo Domingo, Hayti, that a great blow to the sugar industry was the closing of British ports to Dominican sugars in June, 1904; that this places

Dominican sugars at the mercy of the American Sugar Trust, and closed a market to them where the price was higher than the American market; and has their attention been given to the further statement by Mr. Gosling that the introduction of Dominican sugars into the United Kingdom is now permitted; can he state when the permission here alluded to was given, on what ground the decision to prohibit the importation into the United Kingdom of Dominican sugars was reversed; whether it was in consequence of any decision of the Brussels Permanent Commission, which His Majesty's Government were bound to enforce; or whether the decision was taken independently of that Commission.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): I am aware of the statement referred to. The circumstances in which the Order in Council repealing the prohibition of Dominican sugar was issued were fully stated in answer to a Question by the hon. Member for West Islington on February 16th.†

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: What was the date of the Order in Council?

MR. BONAR LAW: I have not got it here.

Departmental Committee on Industrial Class Insurances.

***COLONEL LEGGE** (St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether it is intended that the Departmental Committee, recently appointed by the President to inquire as to the various forms of insurance in relation to the industrial classes, shall also deal with the work carried on by dividing societies and slate clubs.

MR. BONAR LAW: The reference to the Departmental Committee recently appointed by the President of the Board of Trade is limited to an inquiry into the operations of companies carrying on certain classes of business in relation to the industrial classes and was not in-

tended to extend to dividing societies, slate clubs, or the unregistered societies.

Customs Watchers' Grievances.

MR. CAUSTON (Southwark, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state what, if any, concessions he is prepared to make in answer to the petition of the Customs watchers.

MR. CAUSTON: I beg also to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will now give an answer to the petition of the upper section non-pensioner watchers which was presented in November last.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The Treasury is now considering certain proposals which have been submitted by the Board of Customs relating to the Customs watchers, and I expect to be in a position to make a statement thereon soon after the recess.

MR. CAUSTON: I will repeat the Question after the Whitsun recess.

Osborne House.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he can state how many persons have visited Osborne House and grounds since they were thrown open to the public.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Eighty-three thousand nine hundred and eighteen.

Admiralty Building Alterations.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: I beg to ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, when the alterations and additions to the old Admiralty buildings were begun, and when it is expected they will be finished, and what sum has already been expended on these alterations and additions; who are the contractors, and when are the contracts to be completed; and whether they are subject to penalties in case of delay.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxli., 312.

LORD BALCARRES: The first contract for these works commenced in December, 1889. The contract for the third extension building now in progress is to be completed on May 1st, 1906. The expenditure on the buildings (including architects' commission) has been £413,647. There have been several successive contracts; that now running for the superstructure of Block III. and alteration of the old Admiralty is held by Messrs. Holloway Brothers. The penalty for delay is £100 per week.

SIR HENRY FOWLER asked whether the opening of the communication from the Mall to Charing Cross was to stand over until after the extensions were made.

LORD BALCARRES: It is impossible to open the Mall into Charing Cross until the superstructure over the road is completed. I may explain that the cost of this alteration is not included in the figures I have given.

SIR HENRY FOWLER: I wanted the entire expenditure?

LORD BALCARRES: I did not know the Question was intended to cover this part. But I will get the figures if the right hon. Gentleman will put another Question.

Railway Goods Rates between Sneem and Cork.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the rate on returned empties from Sneem to Cork has been increased from 10d. to 1s. per cwt., and has been further increased recently to 1s. 3d., rendering the cost double what was charged by the Clyde Shipping Company; whether the Congested Districts Board got any undertaking from the railway company regarding the rate on empties; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): Perhaps, in the unavoidable absence of my right hon. friend, I may be allowed to reply for him to-day. The

Board are in communication with the railway company in reference to this matter.

Sneem Oyster-Bed Pier.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the oyster-bed pier at Sneem, on which a sum of £1,000 was expended by the Congested Districts Board about ten years ago, has been rendered practically useless in consequence of the withdrawal of the Clyde Shipping Company's steamer; and whether the Board will now start a herring-curing station thereon.

MR. ATKINSON: The Board have no reason to believe that the fact is as alleged in the first inquiry. They have arranged to experiment during the coming autumn on the development of a herring fishery in the locality, but cannot yet decide whether Sneem pier will be the most suitable place for a curing station.

Slip at Boat Cove, Glen, County Kerry.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, instead of finishing the toe of the slip at Boat Cove, Glen, county Kerry, last year, the Congested Districts Board went to the expense of carting a number of bags of cement from Glen into Cahirciveen, where each bag is now a solid mass and unfit for further use; whether the official responsible for this waste of public money will be asked for an explanation; and whether good cement will now be sent to replace what has been rendered useless, with a view to completing this piece of work.

MR. ATKINSON: The fact is as stated in the first inquiry, save that the Board have no reason to suppose that the cement is useless. As my right hon. friend recently informed the hon. Member, the Board intend to have a further inspection made in order to ascertain whether additional work is advisable.

MR. BOLAND: Will the inspection be made before the end of the summer?

MR. ATKINSON: I hope so.

Illegal Trawling in Dingle Bay.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the "Helga" was in Valentia on 25th May and went south that evening; that on the following day two steam trawlers were trawling well within the prohibited limits in Dingle Bay; whether he is aware that these trawlers appear to be well acquainted with the arrival and departure of the "Helga," and resume operations as soon as she leaves the district; whether he is aware that the local fishing boats are unable to fish while these trawlers are at work, fearing that their nets would be cut; and whether steps will be taken immediately so as to protect local fishing interests, and make these breakers of the law amenable to the law.

MR. ATKINSON: The "Helga" was not on the Kerry coast on 25th May. The Department have not received any reports that steam trawlers illegally fished in Dingle Bay on 26th May or subsequently.

Irish Mixed Schools.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why, in the case of mixed schools of boys and girls under a master only, in which the average attendance is not sufficient to authorise the appointment of an assistant teacher, there is not any provision in the rules of the Commissioners of National Education to secure that the girls of all ages and the infant boys should be taught by a female, in view of the grounds on which they justify and enforce Rule 127 (b).

MR. ATKINSON: The rules specially provide that a manual instructress may be employed in a school of the kind referred to. About 700 of these instructresses are already employed in such schools.

Irish Model Schools.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what steps, if any, have been taken by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland and the Government to give effect to the recommendations of

Mr. Dale with regard to the model schools; if it is proposed to discontinue in these schools the class of teachers called pupil teachers, who cost about £5,000 per annum, of whom Mr. Dale reports that there does not seem to be any reason of sufficient weight to justify their existence; and, if so, will he explain why have the Commissioners in their new rules just published made provision for the maintenance on their old footing of this class of assistant teachers.

MR. ATKINSON: The Commissioners have made proposals on the subject, and these are at present under the consideration of the Irish Government and the Treasury. Pending a decision in the matter, it would, of course, be premature to change the existing rules.

The Fitzmaurice Estate.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Limerick I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Fitzmaurice property in Queen's County has as yet been sold to the tenants; and, if so, how do matters stand as regards sale to tenants of the remainder of the property in the townlands of Coolnad-hown and Cloghereedy County, or has the attempt at sale been abandoned altogether.

MR. ATKINSON: The Queen's County portion of this estate has recently been sold to the tenants through the Land Judge's Court. As a result, the charges on the entire estate will now be satisfied, and it is, therefore, not intended to proceed in that Court with the sale of the county Limerick part of the property.

Grants to Kerry by the Department of Agriculture.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction made grants from the Endowment Fund or any other fund to any persons in the county of Kerry in the year 1904-5, other than to the county council of Kerry; and, if so, what were the amounts of such grants and to whom were they given.

MR. ATKINSON: Certain payments were made for fishery purposes, and grants for science and art instruction were made to such schools as had earned them. I will forward to the hon. Member the details of these payments. It should have been stated in reply to the hon. Member's Question of Wednesday† last that, in addition to the grants to the county committee, a sum of £100 was paid in 1904-5 out of the Endowment Fund to the Tralee Urban District Technical Instruction Committee in respect of a grant of £500 payable to them for that year; and a further sum of £301 ls. 6d. was paid to them in the same year in respect of the grant for the previous year.

Irish Development Grant Fund Report.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say when the Report of the Ireland Development Grant Fund will be available; and if he can explain how it is that particulars of this Report appeared in the London *Times* of 26th ult., but have not been issued to Irish Members or other Members of this House up to the present date.

MR. ATKINSON: This Report was laid on the Table on May 26th, and a summary of it appeared in *The Times* of the 27th, as it might have appeared in any other paper. I understand that copies of the Return are now available to Members of the House.

MR. FLYNN: There is a growing practice of ignoring Members of this House and supplying documents to the London Press at the earliest possible moment.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): As a matter of practice of some importance, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, when a Paper is laid on the Table of the House, it is available for the Press. It is not circulated amongst Members, and if it gets to the Press it must do so in some illegitimate way. I want to ask how this occurred, namely, that a summary of a Paper laid in dummy on the Table appears in the newspapers before hon. Members receive it?

MR. ATKINSON: This Paper was not laid in dummy. I understand that the Report was laid in its complete form; but of course this is not a matter over which the Irish Office have any control. I cannot say how any person gets access to a document after it has been laid. The Report was not communicated by the Irish Office.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, as this is a matter of some importance, may I ask you who is responsible? The Minister representing the office from which this document emanates says that he is not responsible. A document is laid, not in dummy, apparently, but in full on the Table of the House; it is not circulated amongst hon. Members, but the next morning *The Times* newspaper has a copy of it. If the Minister responsible for the office from which it emanates is not responsible, who is responsible? There must be some way of dealing with this unfair preference to certain journals in this country, and with the contempt shown to the House in the publication of official documents before Members have received them.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I was not aware that this question was going to be raised, but from the information which I have just received it appears that the customary procedure is as follows:—When a Minister lays a document on the Table of the House it becomes technically the property of the whole House. What then happens to the document, I understand, is that it is sent to the Journal Office, and when it reaches the Journal Office it is open to any hon. Member of the House to inspect it. I presume that it was in that way that the document was seen.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Then, apparently, what must have occurred is that some Member went down to the Journal Office and transcribed it and sent it to *The Times*. Is that a proper proceeding?

MR. FLYNN: Can the Attorney-General explain why it took ten days to print this document?

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The importance of this matter is very great. If

† See page 344.

what has been hinted at really takes place, what will happen is that for its own protection every journal in London will be obliged to have a Member of the House as its agent to obtain this information for it in the Journal Office.

Banogue Schoolhouse.

MR. DELANY: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Limerick, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the two rooms, each thirty-four feet by eighteen, in the Banogue Schoolhouse, which give a floor space of fourteen feet per child on the rolls, and had been held to render a class room unnecessary, although under the same roof are not on the same storey, have no communication with each other on the inside, have their entrances on the outside of the house on opposite ends, so that to pass from one end to the other it is necessary to traverse the recreation ground; and whether, seeing that the Catholic Bishop of Limerick stated recently that he had visited the school and found all the children huddled together in one room thirty-four feet by eighteen, he will now ask the Education Commissioners to reconsider the amalgamation of the schools.

MR. ATKINSON: It is a fact that the rooms are one over the other as stated. The senior standards are taught in one room by the master, and the junior standards in the other by the mistress. This arrangement has worked satisfactorily, and the inspector has reported in high terms of the manner in which the school is conducted. The Commissioners do not intend to depart from the arrangement, which is obviously for the benefit of the pupils.

Compensation to Planters on Evicted Farms.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have power, under the Act of 1903, to give money compensation to a planter who is willing to surrender an evicted farm, or to provide him with a farm of equivalent value elsewhere, in order to effect the restoration of the evicted tenant or his representative.

MR. ATKINSON: This is really an abstract question of law for the decision of those administering the Act. I may, however, refer the hon. Member to the reply given by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover to a similar Question on August 13th,† 1904.

Mr. Hornibrook's Appointment as Resident Magistrate for Tipperary.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the appointment of Mr. Hornibrook to the office of resident magistrate for the county of Tipperary, and having regard to the fact that he is one of those magistrates who are liable to be called on to administer the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, will he state what are the qualifications of Mr. Hornibrook for that office; whether he is an Irishman; and, if not, whether he had any personal experience of Ireland in any capacity previous to his appointment; and whether he is liable to dismissal at the will of the Executive.

MR. ATKINSON: This appointment was made at the instance of my right hon. friend the late Chief Secretary, who, I have no doubt, was fully satisfied as to Mr. Hornibrook's qualifications. Mr. Hornibrook is an Englishman, and a graduate of Cambridge. He has had upwards of five years continuous official experience in connection with Ireland, first as private secretary to the Attorney-General for Ireland, and secondly as private secretary to the late Chief Secretary. He holds office under the tenure assigned to resident magistrates by statute, that is to say, during the pleasure of the Lord-Lieutenant.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Are we to understand that in the case of this gentleman no one has satisfied himself of his legal qualifications.

MR. ATKINSON: On the contrary, my right hon. friend has satisfied himself.

Trespass Summonses against Patrick Costelloe at Gurteen Petty Sessions.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the

† See (4) *Debates*, cxl., 516.

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that fourteen summonses have been issued against Patrick Costelloe for trespass of his sheep on the lands of others, which was caused by the malicious destruction of his fences, he will bring the facts before the Estates Commissioners, with a view to their refusing to assist in any way in the purchase and resale and sub-division of Costelloe's farm to small holders.

MR. ATKINSON: At Gurteen Petty Sessions on Friday last a number of summonses against Costelloe for the trespass of his sheep were heard; as also several summonses on his complaint against others for the trespass of their cattle on his lands. Damages were awarded against the parties on both sides. It appeared that these acts of trespass were due to the fact that 600 yards of the walls of Costelloe's farm had been maliciously knocked down, and it was stated that Costelloe was unable to procure labour to repair the fences. The estate of which Costelloe's farm is a part is under the care of the Lord Chancellor in a lunacy matter. No proceedings for sale have come before the Estates Commissioners, nor can they come before them without the order of the Lord Chancellor, who will be duly informed of these matters. Should the Lord Chancellor make an order for sale, I do not think the Lord-Lieutenant could, in a particular case, take the course suggested; but, as my hon. friend has been already informed, it is hoped to deal with the question of intimidation in the regulations.

MR. MACVEAGH: For the purposes of Parliamentary discussion is this case returned as twenty-seven cases or only as one?

[No Answer was returned.]

Coltsmann Estate, County Kerry.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what steps the Estates Commissioners have taken in connection with the reinstatement of the evicted tenants on the Coltsmann Estate, county Kerry, which estate is now before them for sale.

MR. ATKINSON: Applications from three evicted tenants have been received. In the case of one of them, Daniel Healy, the holding is in the possession of his brother as a judicial tenant. Daniel Healy's application will, however, be considered, should the Commissioners acquire untenanted land in the locality. In the second case, Daniel Casey has been reinstated by the landlord, and the question of a grant to him is under consideration. In the third case, the application of Daniel Lucy is under consideration.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Can the right hon. Gentleman explain the absence of the Chief Secretary, to whom all these Questions are addressed?

MR. ATKINSON: He is unavoidably detained in the country.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Motoring at forty miles an hour perhaps.

Sir Douglas Brooke's Speech.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to a statement made in a speech by Sir Douglas Brooke, Baronet, a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant of the county of Fermanagh, at Maguiresbridge in that county, while addressing an audience of Orangemen, that at the time of Mr. Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill he had given out rifles to his Protestant tenantry and had taught some of those Protestants how to shoot those rifles straight, and that there were a good many of those rifles still in the country, any search will be instituted for concealed arms among the Protestant tenantry of Sir Douglas Brooke, similar to the search for arms instituted by the direction of the Government among the Catholic tenants of the De Freyne Estate; and, if not, whether he can explain the different methods of administration with respect to the concealment of arms by Orangemen and Catholics.

MR. ATKINSON: In reply to a Question asked on Monday last, my right hon. friend declined to make any statement as to the intention to search for unlicensed

† See page 95.

firearms. No question of religion arises in connection with this matter. Searches are made when there is reason to believe that arms are illegally kept.

MR. MACVEAGH: As this gentleman said he had given out arms, why do not the Government search for them as in other districts?

MR. ATKINSON: The statement was made twenty years ago.

MR. MACVEAGH: Nonsense, it was made a few months ago.

MR. ATKINSON: I quite understood it was made during the discussions on the Home Rule movement.

MR. MACVEAGH: It was only delivered two or three months ago.

MR. ATKINSON: Then I will ask the hon. Member to put down another Question.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The Chief Secretary ought to be here.

MR. MACVEAGH: Is this man to remain on the bench?

MR. ATKINSON: The matter was laid before the Lord Chancellor, who replied that he knew nothing about this speech, and does not think it very important to consider what was said in reference to incidents of many years ago, and which may never recur.

MR. MACVEAGH: In view of the fact that the speech was made so recently, will the right hon. Gentleman again draw the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the matter?

MR. ATKINSON: Certainly.

Arterial Drainage in Ireland.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has yet appointed the Commissioners to inquire into the subject of Arterial Drainage in Ireland; and, if so, will he now state their names and qualifications and give the terms of their instructions; and, if he has not yet made such appointments,

will he consult either the Parliamentary representatives of the people or the Council of County Councils in Ireland as to the proper persons to serve on such Commission.

MR. ATKINSON: No, Sir. The Commission has not yet been constituted, nor have the terms of reference been settled. My right hon. friend will be happy to consider any representations made to him as to the constitution of the Commission.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: Will inquiries be made of representatives of the people—Members of Parliament or councillors or other suitable persons?

MR. ATKINSON: My right hon. friend will willingly consider any representations, from whatever source they may come.

Portadown Post Office—Combination among Postal Officials.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, seeing that the staff of the Post Office have been informed repeatedly by Ministerial statements in this House that they possess the rights of combination in the same measure as those possessed by ordinary workpeople, he will institute inquiries into the treatment of the local secretary of the Telegraph Clerks' Association at Portadown by the postmaster since he became the secretary of his branch.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): I will inquire into the matter.

Counter Losses at the Portadown Post Office.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a learner at Portadown, in receipt of 14s. per week, having the monetary responsibility of stamps, money orders, postal orders, Inland Revenue stamps, issue of licences, and other work involving the handling of hundreds of pounds sterling, during the four weeks ending 27th May, 1905, lost £3 8s. 9d.; will he say whether this learner will be compelled to make up this amount out

of his wages; and whether he will take steps that learners in receipt of small wages shall not be entrusted with this important work.

LORD STANLEY: I am inquiring into the matter and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin County, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can make any statement with regard to the promised Committee to inquire into the question of the Royal Hibernian Academy, and other science and art institutions in Dublin.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I am still engaged in making inquiries on this matter, and I have as yet no statement to make thereon.

The Government's Fiscal Policy.

MR. BUCHANAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will issue a Memorandum containing those parts of his speeches which embody the present authoritative fiscal policy of the Government.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am not quite sure as to the exact nature of the request made by the right hon. Gentleman. I do not know whether he wants me to make excerpts of my speeches to be laid on the Table as a Parliamentary Paper. If so, I am afraid that no precedent exists for such a course, and I certainly could not initiate it. If he wants me to publish on my own responsibility elegant extracts, again I think the task of selection would be quite unnecessary. But as I know the industry hon. Gentlemen put into the search for material for votes of censure, I think it might be a convenience, perhaps, if I were to publish all my speeches on the fiscal question, and though the volume would certainly be tedious, and, I fear, bulky, the study of it for the ulterior object I have suggested might incidentally have the advantage of giving some information to hon. Gentlemen opposite on a subject on which they appear to be very curious.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): Would the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to the Tariff Reform League publishing the volume?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not object.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): Could the right hon. Gentleman's free-trade and protectionist views be published in parallel columns?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman or any other hon. Gentleman of ingenious mind, when he has studied those documents, may see whether he could produce them in parallel columns.

The East Ham Educational Difficulty.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the fact that the East Ham Town Council have rescinded the resolution passed by the council on April 18th, 1905, on the ground of an alleged indication by the Government to promote, during the present session of Parliament, legislation which will give additional grants to necessitous districts; whether any such indication has been given by the Government; and whether it is, in fact, the intention of the Government to promote such legislation.

MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): I beg also to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the East Ham Borough Council have now rescinded the resolution in which they declared their inability to continue to administer the Education Acts; and whether, in view of this fact, the Government are now prepared to consider the special circumstances of this and other authorities which are heavily rated for the purposes of education.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have been in correspondence with my hon. friend the Member for West Ham on this subject. I have heard with the greatest satisfaction that the corporation of East Ham have rescinded the resolution to which reference has been made; and I have indicated to those who represent East Ham, or any other districts similarly situated, my

readiness to hear their views on the particular difficulties with which they are met in connection with the present heavy rating prevailing in those areas.

MR. MCKENNA: May I call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the words of the Question, and ask him on that—was any indication of immediate legislation given, and is it proposed to introduce any such legislation during the present session?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not aware of any such indication. I made no indication, but I do not know what hon. Gentlemen opposite may interpret as an indication. What I said was that I should be very glad to listen to what these gentlemen have to say, and until I have heard them it is premature for me to make any statement on the subject.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): Has any assurance been given directly or indirectly by the Government to the authorities at East Ham or anybody representing them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have answered the Question. If the hon. Gentleman thinks there is an indication, and will tell me what it is, I will endeavour to interpret it.

MR. MCKENNA: But there is the distinct statement that the resolution was rescinded because of some indication given.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman had better ask the local authority what was the indication, and then put another Question to me on it.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): As I was present at the meeting of the local authority, I can say that no such pledge was received by them. They decided to rescind the resolution on their own account, without any promise.

The Colonial Conference and the Press.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the impor-

tance attached to the holding of the Colonial Conference in 1906 and the consequences that may flow from its deliberations, and having regard to the repeated declarations of His Majesty's Ministers in favour of the conference being free and unfettered, he will arrange that the proceedings of the conference shall be open to the public Press, or at least that the public Press shall be represented at those proceedings when the commercial relations of the various parts of the Empire are under discussion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It must rest with the Colonial Conference itself to determine whether it will or will not have representatives of the Press present at its deliberations. If they take my advice they certainly will not admit the Press. I believe it would be abso utely fatal to any good work being done.

The Colonies and the Navy.

MR. JOHN CAMPBELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will instruct the delegates appointed to represent His Majesty's Government at the Colonial Conference, 1906, to press upon the delegates of the various colonies that, in return for any preference allowed their products in the British markets, it would be advisable that their Governments should make a contribution towards defraying the expenses of the Navy charged with the defence of their coasts.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it is premature to deal with the conference, which cannot meet for more than a year hence.

The Colonial Conference and the Taxation of Food.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the Resolution of the House on the 4th April last relating to indirect taxes on food, he will, when summoning the conference of 1906, take care to inform the Colonies that the conference is held on the understanding that this country will not agree to any scheme of preferential

trading involving the taxation of corn, meat, or dairy produce.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Any conference which is summoned under the auspices of the present Government will be a free conference.

The Colonial Conference and the General Election.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the necessity of keeping Colonial Conferences free from British Party politics, he will intimate the desirability that the next Colonial Conference should not be held until after the next general election, when the fiscal controversy possibly may not be so acute.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I have already intimated, the conference is not to meet for over twelve months, and it does not appear to me a matter in which we can usefully lay down regulations at the present moment. I understand this Question refers directly to a matter on which it is proposed to have a vote of censure on the Government.

MR. LAMBERT: My Question is whether the conference will be called after the general election or not.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Member reads the terms of the proposed vote of censure I think he will see that that is the point.

MR. LAMBERT: What vote of censure? Where is it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It was not I who put it on the Paper or who withdrew it.

MR. SOARES: With all respect, the right hon. Gentleman has mixed up two Answers. He gave to my hon. friend the Answer to my Question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As both Questions refer to a matter the discussion on which, it seems to me, we might with great advantage defer to a later time, there may have been an appropriateness in the Answer I gave to both Questions. Both are premature—they have that in common, at all events.

Motor-Car Legislation.

MR. SOARES: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the feeling existing in the country and in this House that immediate legislation is required to protect the public from the dangers arising from the reckless driving of motor-cars, he will give facilities for the passing this session of a short Bill substituting the penalty of imprisonment for the present penalty of a fine in those cases in which the driver of a motor-car is convicted of driving recklessly and to the danger of the public.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it would be possible or desirable to have legislation before the inquiry promised by the President of the Local Government Board has been instituted. The present Act expires next year, and my right hon. friend has promised an inquiry, and I do not think anything more can be done at present.

MR. SOARES: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that no one wants an inquiry or any such dilatory device?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member has not the smallest right to use the word "dilatory" in this matter, and he is absolutely incorrect in saying that nobody wants the inquiry.

Depopulation of Ireland.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the fact that since 1841 the population of Ireland has declined from 8,197,000 to 4,458,775, being a reduction equal to nearly 90 per cent. of the present population of the country; whether he is aware that in the same period the population of England has increased from 16,038,000 to 30,807,243, being an increase of nearly 90 per cent., and that of Scotland from 2,620,000 to 4,472,103, being an increase of nearly 70 per cent.; whether he is aware that the population of Ireland is still decreasing, whilst that of England and Scotland is still increasing; and whether he proposes to initiate during the present session any legislation

with the object of arresting the continued decline in the population of Ireland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe the figures in the Question are substantially accurate, although not to a figure. I have no suggestion to make for dealing by legislation with the question of the depopulation of Ireland.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Do we take that as a confession of despair on the part of the British Government of Ireland and of failure to stem the tide of emigration from that country?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not take it in that way at all. The hon. Member will agree that the standard of comfort of the inhabitants as well as their number has to be taken into account.

Returns of Agrarian Offences in Ireland.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that a Parliamentary Return is issued every quarter giving statistics of alleged agrarian offences in Ireland, and that no such Return is issued quarterly or annually for England, Scotland, or Wales; whether he can state the reason for circulating such a Return specially for Ireland; and whether he will give directions that similar Returns will be circulated with regard to England, Scotland, or Wales, or, alternatively, that the Return for Ireland will be discontinued.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The varying statistics of Ireland for a century at least—I think longer—have been regarded as an indication of the social condition of that country. That, however, has not been the case in England and Wales or in Scotland. Hence statistics are obtained in one case and not in the other.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Has the right hon. Gentleman any statement to make with regard to business?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The House is aware that the Speaker will to-morrow

place his resignation in the hands of the House; the Government business will be Committee of Supply, Board of Trade Vote. On Wednesday it is proposed to introduce the Scottish Church Bill, and after that the Motion to adjourn on the following day for the holidays. On Thursday the House will proceed to elect a new Speaker and afterwards of necessity adjourn.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: What will be the first business after the holidays?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In the week after the holidays the Second Reading of the Unemployed Bill will be taken on the day of meeting (Tuesday, 20th), on Wednesday and on Friday the Consolidated Fund Bill and the Indian Budget will be taken, the order of their consideration being undecided at present, and on Thursday I propose to take Scottish Estimates.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say what date will be given for the Motion of my right hon. friend the Member for Berwick?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that in my absence, which I greatly regret, the right hon. Gentleman indicated that to-day, which would have been at his disposal, was inconvenient for the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Berwick. As the first week after the holidays will probably not be the most convenient time, I propose to take it early in the following week, if that meets the views of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked when the salary of the First Lord of the Admiralty could be put down, in order to enable attention to be called to the case of the midshipman who had fired five shots at his superior officer and wounded him in both cheeks and in one arm.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am anxious to meet the convenience of the House with regard to Supply, but I do not know that the reason given for putting down

the Vote for the First Lord's salary out of its order is adequate. I will, however, consider the matter.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Noel Edward Buxton, esquire, for County of York, North Riding (Whitby Division).

Lieutenant-Colonel Edmund Bernard Talbot, M.V.O., D.S.O., commonly called Lord Edmund Talbot, County of Sussex (South Western or Chichester Division).

FINANCE BILL.

[THIRD READING.]

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said he desired to once again raise the question of the over-taxation of Ireland. They had recently been told that at certain places in England taxation had now reached a point almost beyond endurance, and if that were true with regard to a wealthy country like Great Britain, how much more applicable was it to Ireland? He desired that day to draw attention to the enormous increase in the revenue derived from Ireland as revealed by the Returns furnished by the Treasury—and he desired especially to draw attention to the increase since the Royal Commission on Financial Relations presented their first Report. When ten years ago that Commission reported, the revenue raised in Ireland amounted to £7,568,000—a sum admitted to be in excess of the country's taxable capacity to the extent of £2,750,000 according to the evidence of the Treasury experts. But by 1902-3 the revenue had gone up to £10,205,000, and although a year later it fell to £9,925,000 in consequence of certain remissions of taxation by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, yet the fact remained that in the decade another £2,500,000 had been wrung out of Ireland under the present system of taxation. The

figures revealed indeed a very dangerous condition of things. They had a diminishing population, a large part of the country was going out of cultivation, and the people were being driven from home by lack of work, yet the only remedy applied by England was to increase Ireland's burdens year after year, not by hundreds or thousands but by millions of pounds. The increase in ten years represented five times the amount of the agricultural grant voted in 1898, and sixteen times the amount of the development grant of last year. It was thirty times the revenue of the Congested Districts Board and yet they were often taunted with the doles made to their country!

The indirect taxation represented 75 per cent. of Irish taxation, and that fell most heavily on the poorest people. In 1821 the population of Ireland represented 32 per cent. of the entire population of the United Kingdom. In 1841 it was 31 per cent., but in 1903 it had fallen to 10·42 per cent.—a decline of population unexampled in the civilised world. In 1821 the revenue from Ireland represented 14s. 2d. per head of the population; in 1849 it was 14s. 9d.; and then commenced the system of taxation enshrined in the present Finance Bill, which relieved the people of England of a number of taxes at the expense of the people of Ireland. What was the result? In 1859 the taxation rose to £1 6s. 7d. per head; ten years later, £1 7s. 9d.; in 1879, £1 8s. 2d.; in 1889, £1 12s. 6d.; in 1899, £1 18s.; 2d.; and in 1904, £2 4s. 2d.—three times what it was seventy years previously! The system was most unfair and unjust to Ireland, as Sir Robert Giffen, a great financial authority, had admitted. The Royal Commission came to the conclusion that Ireland ought not to be called upon to contribute more than one-twentieth of the entire revenue of the United Kingdom. The Irish Members held that that was excessive, but accepting the standard for the moment they found that in 1902 Ireland was contributing over £4,000,000 in excess of her share. These were very serious figures. When in 1853 the taxes were removed from corn, flour, and other commodities, a crushing blow was inflicted on Ireland. The teeming industrial population of

England no doubt greatly benefited, and he would be one of the last to suggest that such taxes should be reimposed on them, but the agricultural industry of Ireland was ruined, landlord and tenant alike shared in the disaster, and no compensation was given her in return.

What remedy did the Chancellor of the Exchequer propose to apply? They were often told how generous their stepmother was to them, and what large sums of money she advanced, but it seemed to be forgotten that this money was obtained from Irish sources, and if there were any loss on the transaction it fell on the Irish and not on the English ratepayer. An hon. friend of his brought forward a Motion on the arterial drainage of Ireland, and proved how thousands of acres were absolutely ruined and worthless owing to the wretchedly imperfect system of drainage. The Chief Secretary acknowledged the great loss and ruin to Ireland, but stated that the Government could not afford the money to improve the drainage, and this at a time when Ireland was being overtaxed to the extent of several millions. The same answer was given when the Irish representatives brought forward other grievances, and asked that some of their own money should be applied to the development of the country. It was their duty to bring forward this case year after year. If they had control of their own purse they would in a very short time, whether Nationalist or non-Nationalist, remedy this state of matters, but so long as the present unfair system continued so long would grievances exist. He was not without hope that they would before long wring from a reluctant Treasury an acknowledgment of the justice of their case.

*Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton) called attention to the periods over which repayments were made of the debt now being created for public works purposes. This debt was growing to large proportions, and it had arisen practically within the last fifteen years. It already reached about £41,500,000, and there was a much larger liability still to be met. Taking the debt of this character from the beginning we had already created nearly £48,000,000, and we had rendered

ourselves liable under various Acts of Parliament, for public works loans, etc., for a further sum of £14,500,000, so that really the total debt incurred or to be incurred was £62,500,000. It was of extreme importance to the future taxpayers of this country to see that the money should be repaid within reasonable periods. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech, referring to the creation of this debt, said that we held against it assets in the shape of works constructed by means of the expenditure which would outlast the currency of the debt itself. The hon. Member wished to point out that there was at least a good deal of debt which would not be repaid within the currency of these assets, and he proposed to give a few instances which, he thought, would prove his case.

Under the Naval Works Loans Act of 1903 there was an item approaching £1,000,000 for electric plant in the dockyards of this country. Electricity, as everybody knew, was practically a new force, and enormous improvements were being made every year in the use of electrical energy. Improvements were also being made in the machinery by which that energy was produced and carried to the purposes for which it was used. The other day he was at a Committee meeting in another place on the London Power Bill, and heard the evidence of a gentleman of great experience in regard to electricity. That gentleman, who was himself a maker of electrical machinery, gave a piece of evidence which was very apropos to this question. He informed the Committee that electric motors cost at the present time only about half what they did four or five years ago. If that was the case it showed how rapidly these articles were deteriorating, how very much cheaper they were becoming, and how very careful the Treasury should be in deciding the period that should be allowed for the repayment of loans granted for the purposes of electricity. Replying to a Question on this point, the Secretary of the Treasury informed him that the money was only being repaid in twenty-nine or thirty years. It was perfectly absurd to take thirty

years to wipe off debt incurred for electrical apparatus. It ought to be done much more rapidly. In this case we were going to leave to future taxpayers the payment for electrical plant which would have ceased to exist long before the thirty years came to an end. Another instance was to be found in the case of the Pacific cable. The money was to be repaid in fifty years, but he did not suppose that any man connected with the cable trade would say that the Pacific cable would last that period. This was simply charging on futurity a debt which we ought to have taken upon ourselves. In the case of the Cunard Agreement, it was perfectly true that the money was to be repaid by the Cunard Company, and that it would not come out of the pockets of the taxpayers, but we were advancing money to build two steamers, and the payment was to extend to a period of twenty years. It might be that that was the life of a boat, but it was not the life of a boat for the purpose for which we were advancing the money. Would anybody who had watched the progress of shipbuilding say that these two boats would remain for twenty years of the same use to us? That was a case in which the money ought to have been repaid in a shorter period than twenty years.

In the course of his speech on the question of Imperial defence the Prime Minister told them what was going on in regard to the fortification of certain islands in the West Indies. The right hon. Gentleman stated that St. Lucia was to be abandoned as a naval base. During the past ten years there had been expended on that naval station £475,000, and that money had all been charged on the military and naval works accounts. It was to be repaid in twenty-nine or thirty years, but these works had already ceased to be of use, and therefore the cost was to fall on future taxpayers. That was unsound finance. In regard to Halifax the Prime Minister stated that it was to be handed over to the Canadian Government. We had spent £340,000 there, and the taxpayers of this country would be going on paying for those works for the next thirty years. At Bermuda we had spent £900,000 on works, and

there the garrison was to be reduced. Presumably, therefore, a large amount of the money had been spent in vain. In the same way the garrison was to be reduced at Jamaica where we had spent £250,000. These were instances where the assets would not outlast the currency of the debt, and that was a very serious matter. He was sure the Treasury would support the Chancellor of the Exchequer in shortening the period for the repayment of future loans. The right hon. Gentleman had hinted that in the future we might hope to have very much less borrowing under the Public Works Loans Acts than we had had in the past. There was a great deal of money to be raised on works already undertaken, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would see that the repayments were made in such a way that future taxpayers would not be called upon to pay what ought to be paid at the present time.

MR. GUEST (Plymouth) said he wished to refer to the Transvaal contribution, not for the purpose of indulging in re- crimination, but because he believed the expectation which the Chancellor of the Exchequer held out with regard to this sum of money had been responsible for most, if not all, the bad finance of which complaint was made on his side of the House. It was worth while to underline the admission which was made on the Committee stage on this question. The attitude of the Government on the question of the contribution was one of apology and of hope. He did not think anybody on his side of the House for one moment accused them of any intentional deception in regard to that sum of money. Perhaps the nature and character of the guarantee might have been somewhat exaggerated and coloured in order to satisfy the right hon. Member for Croydon when, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he made his estimates. The hopefulness of the Government in regard to the character of the guarantee on which their estimates were based was, he thought, revealed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham at a late period of the debate.

They knew that the right hon. Member for West Birmingham had a sanguine temperament, especially where

colonial booms were concerned. There was not a disposition to deny that the right hon. Gentleman wished to place good faith on the promises, such as they were, which were made in Johannesburg and elsewhere, by the Rand magnates. But the point which came out in the debate was that the decision in this matter was not entirely in the hands of the mining magnates. It was very possible, if not probable, that the electors in the Transvaal, when they exercised the franchise under the new Constitution, would return a Party to power with Boer sympathies. If the Boers had a majority, the right hon. Gentleman himself admitted that it would be an insult to expect that that majority should take up the obligation which fell not on them but on the British in the Transvaal. The fact of this debt being in question would be one of the best recommendations for the candidature of the Boers, and it was therefore quite possible that they would obtain a majority. But supposing there was a British majority, were the prospects of obtaining this £30,000,000 very much better? He did not think so. In the first place there would be a powerful Boer minority and it would be one of the first objects of the British majority to try and conciliate the Boer minority. They would not willingly pass Acts which would be regarded by that minority as an insult, or which would be entirely hostile to their view. Therefore the obligation would be of the nature of, in sporting phrase, paying for a dead horse. All the advantage which accrued to the Transvaal from the bargain with the British House of Commons would have been already secured; there could be no potential advantage which they could further secure. There would be many pressing domestic matters for which money would be required. They would say that charity should begin at home and that they should look to the improvement and betterment of the condition of the Transvaal. Therefore, he thought that it was extremely probable that the market conditions would continue to be unfavourable.

The difference between those on his side of the House and hon. Gentlemen opposite was whereas the

Mr. Guest.

latter regarded this sum of money as a debt, the former considered it as a bad debt, and they wanted the Chancellor of the Exchequer to write it off. He held that this unpaid grant of £30,000,000 together with the size of the Unfunded Debt, was responsible for the low price of Consols. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, from a financial point of view, to write it off and no longer regard it as a realisable asset. It had been pointed out that the additional £1,000,000 added to the fixed debt-charge did nothing else than recognise that the payment of the £30,000,000 was of the most problematical character. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had, therefore, not made any substantial addition to the fixed debt-charge, and the better way would be to regard that additional £1,000,000 as representing the interest on the £30,000,000. He urged the right hon. Gentleman, if he was still in office next year, to aim at still further increasing the fixed charge for the debt. It was a matter of common knowledge that since the calculation was made by the right hon. Member for Croydon when he fixed the debt-charge at £27,000,000 the indebtedness of the country had not been diminished, but increased; and, consequently, it was a clear obligation on the Chancellor of the Exchequer to so assess the fixed debt-charge that the total debt should be gradually extinguished.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said he wished to clear up a conversation that took place between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and himself a day or two ago about the mode of presenting the Exchequer accounts of receipts and expenditure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he was bound by the wording of the Act of Parliament to present these accounts in the shape he did. He himself did not at first dispute that construction of the Act of Parliament, although he had his doubts about it. The Act of Parliament clearly contemplated all payments being made into the Bank of England to the Exchequer account; and people had thought that the whole amount of the revenue was paid into that Bank and then divided. He held that an ordinary

educated man would say, from the accounts as now presented of the weekly receipts and issues from the Exchequer, that the total amount paid in from Customs, Excise, death duties, and estate duty was £13,000,000, whereas it was over £18,000,000. It only required a stroke of the pen by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to put that misrepresentation right. They knew why the accounts were presented in that mode. It was a make-believe to induce the passing of certain legislation and to make the people believe that a new tax was being imposed in favour of the local authorities. It was nothing of the sort. It was as much a grant from the Imperial Exchequer as any other grant from that source. He asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to state the receipts and payments on both sides and to enter the real amount he received from Customs, Excise, estate duty, and the death duties, and then enter on the other side "transferred to the local taxation account." It was as much a transfer as any made for the payment of the National Debt or for payments to Consolidated Fund expenditure. By the present system of accounts, which was very confusing, there was an item "Payment to local taxation account one million odd;" whereas the real payment was £10,000,000. The taxpayers ought to know that out of the Imperial revenue the payments to the local authorities amounted to between £10,000,000 and £11,000,000.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he entirely sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman in his desire that our national accounts should be presented in a more complete and accurate form. At present they were neither complete nor accurate. He would point out to the House that the very charter of our financial system was laid down by Mr. Gladstone—who, whatever else he was, was a very great Chancellor of the Exchequer—in the Exchequer Act of 1866. In that Act it was prescribed most solemnly that the gross receipts of all the revenue departments should be paid into the Exchequer account in the Bank of England. That was the true principle; and on that principle all this intercepted taxation to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred would have

been paid into the Exchequer account in the Bank of England and all these questions would not have arisen. Our system of keeping the national accounts was on a pure cash basis. It resembled a banker's accounts. France had a different method, but ours was undoubtedly the best of all for the purpose of the control of Parliament. It should be a pure account—all the receipts on one side and all the payments on the other. But they should have all the receipts and all the payments. If the Act of 1866 had remained in full operation, that would be the precise form of accounts they would have at the present day. The Act of 1875 amended the Act of 1866. It prescribed that an account should be given of all money paid into the Bank of England with one exception—a very proper exception—namely, money raised by loan. That showed the receipts from revenue and by way of loan. If that system were maintained, the national accounts would now be complete and accurate. What had happened was that successive Chancellors of the Exchequer had entirely departed from the Acts of 1866 and 1875; and were now rendering the accounts in accordance with amending Acts. There had been set on foot the gigantic system of interceptions. The local taxation account was held to be entirely separate from the Exchequer account, and to be subject to different rules and regulations. The loan receipts were always treated separately under the Act of 1875; but he went further than the right hon. Gentleman, and maintained that the £9,000,000 or £10,000,000 for appropriations-in-aid should also be shown.

SIR HENRY FOWLER said that last week the receipts from Customs, Excise, and estate duty amounted to £1,000,000. Then in a separate account a sum of £90,000 was shown as having been paid out of the Exchequer to the local taxation account. These amounts were transferred from time to time as was thought desirable by the Treasury.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he did not know that there was any misunderstanding between the right hon. Gentleman and himself. Formerly, a Department such as the Inland Revenue was under an

obligation to pay its receipts into the Exchequer account, and there were no interceptions. Now there were two separate payments.

SIR HENRY FOWLER said he was referring to the weekly statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer which had no reference to any Act of Parliament.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was probably not inaccurate. Whatever else it was, the Treasury was almost always accurate. The right hon. Gentleman would, however, find that the total receipts, including those for local taxation, were not paid into the Exchequer account. He further contended that the account of receipts and expenditure should include appropriations-in-aid. At present they appeared in no account at all. They were not recognised in any shape or form in the public accounts except in the form of loans. The House of Commons had no jurisdiction over them. The £10,000,000 from the local taxation account and the £10,000,000 for appropriations-in-aid, ought to be included in the national accounts. He would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he would rather mislead the people by the Return he desired. The accounts should show the gross receipts and the gross expenditure, with any explanations that might be necessary. They should be prepared as was ordained in the Act of 1866 as amended by the Act of 1875; and, further, the horrible interceptions which now occurred should be stopped. The present system greatly deceived the people, and even the House if that were possible; and he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had called attention to its inadequacy and incompleteness. He was certain that if the right hon. Gentleman and himself had a conference they would agree as to how the accounts should be presented in such a manner as would enable one year to be compared with any other. At present, not only were the accounts as false as they could be, but they were rendered in such a manner as to make it impossible to compare them with any year prior to 1866. The public did not understand the intricacy of the accounts, and very few went into details which were so

fascinating and often so painful to many hon. Members. He earnestly hoped that one result of the awakening he saw in the public mind as to the importance of economy and the diminution of expenditure would be a reconstruction of the present system of accounts so that the public might know the real facts regarding national finance.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said a great many persons thought last year that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had made a great mistake from beginning to end in his treatment of the tobacco duties, and they had had sufficient evidence in the debates that had taken place during the preceding stages of the Finance Bill to show that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a little less sure now than he was last year as to the advisability of the alterations he had made in those duties. The right hon. Gentleman had informed the House, in reply to a Question, that the yield of the extra duty put upon imported cigarettes had fallen £5,349 below what was anticipated. That was to say, there was an error in the right hon. Gentleman's calculations of no less than 27½ per cent. That was a serious discrepancy, and such a discrepancy should not be possible in the calculations of those responsible for the accounts of the national income and expenditure.

He and others agreed last year that this attempt to put extra duty on foreign cigarettes would lessen the trade in that article, and that consequently there would be a reduction in the yield from it. He had described it as a suicidal tax, and that had been proved by the fact that it had brought about the detriment of a useful and beneficial trade. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had not stated completely the amount of loss to the Exchequer in consequence of this increased duty. He found that the revenue from cigarettes when 3s. 10d. was the duty was £88,597. That was the calculated duty on the import of foreign cigarettes. He found that the amount of the cigarettes imported was 462,245 lbs., which, when the duty was at 3s. 10d. produced a sum of £88,597. In 1904 the amount of foreign cigarettes imported

Mr. Gibson Bowles.

was 31,093 lbs. which, with the additional duty, produced £80,014. The total loss to the Exchequer was therefore £8,500, and he asked how it was that the loss was stated to be only £5,349. Since last year the trade in foreign cigarettes had declined. It was always bad finance to tax a trade out of existence, and that was what the Chancellor of the Exchequer was doing in this case. It was a declining trade under the original tenpenny extra duty which had been enough to meet cigarettes coming from America, and which was quite sufficient to protect the British industry. But the extra shilling, which was far more than sufficient to protect British industry, was killing the trade. In 1902 619,000 lbs. of foreign cigarettes were imported; in 1903, 462,249 lbs.; and in 1904, 331,093 lbs. So that in 1904 we only imported about one-half of what we imported in 1902. There was a feeling that this by no means indicated the amount of injury that would be done in this trade if things went on as they were. There were no doubt many contracts running at the time this extra shilling was put on, yet the imports had fallen by 130,000 lbs. as against the imports of 1903.

It was a bad tax on two grounds, first, because it checked the trade upon which the revenue was raised, and, secondly, because it disappointed the Exchequer in the amount of revenue realised. His object in bringing the figures before the House was to obtain from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if possible, some information as to the exact position of the foreign cigarette trade under this system of finance. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman was compelled in the Finance Bill of this year to continue this duty, which would become less and less productive until, as time went on, the amount coming from this source would be infinitesimal. Finance such as this ought not to be encouraged and ought not to receive the assent of this House. As he had pointed out last year, both this tax and the tax on stripped tobacco were unprofitable taxes to the Exchequer, burdensome to the community, and were only favourable to the large manufacturers, tending as they did to

produce monopolies instead of encouraging competition. Taxes of this kind were not in the best interests of the community.

*SIR CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been attacked on the subject of the sugar duties, the coal duties, and the tea duties. He desired to take this opportunity of entering a protest with regard to the incidence of the income-tax. Very little had been said with regard to the income-tax, but it was not possible to expect from the point of view of those interested in the commerce of this country, that the income-tax could be maintained at its existing level. The charges both in respect to the taxes and the rates of this country were becoming alarming. There was an increase in the national expenditure as compared to what it was ten years ago of £50,000,000, whilst the increase in the rates for the corresponding period had been £20,000,000, which together represented a total increase of £70,000,000. That was a heavy additional burden upon the 45,000,000 of people of this country. The right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured, as had his predecessors, to establish a fair balance with regard to revenue for Imperial purposes as between direct and indirect taxation. Last year the right hon. Gentleman estimated that 51·9 per cent. would come from indirect taxation, but the amount realised was only 50·8 per cent. There were many in this House who constantly urged the reduction of indirect taxation. He would like to impress on his right hon. friend the fact that those connected with commerce could not long support the present burden of direct taxation. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to consider this matter, and before his next Budget was introduced he hoped some check would be put on the extreme expenditure with regard to military matters and with regard to the expenditure on education. The Education Act was a wise Act, but there was a rapidly growing feeling in this country that some of our expenditure on education was wasteful expenditure, and that there was room for economy. He hoped before bringing in his next Budget the

Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider this question.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) heartily endorsed the protest of the last speaker against the maintenance of the income-tax at anything like its present rate, which had a most oppressive effect on industry and the money market. The well-being of the country depended on there being greater ease in the money market than had been experienced for many years past, and therefore he was glad to hear so sturdy a supporter of the Government speak in favour of economy, and especially denounce the military expenditure. If only the hon. Member would go on and denounce the expenditure on the Navy—

*SIR CHARLES RENSHAW said that with regard to the Navy he believed that we were getting value for the money we spent, but he doubted whether that was so in the case of the Army.

MR. LOUGH contended that even though we were getting value for the money, if we could not afford it the expenditure should be reduced. He was not attacking the expenditure on the Navy, but merely pointing to the financial position of the country. Last year a proposal of his which would have had the effect of reducing the Navy Estimates by £160,000 was treated almost as high treason, but within six months the Government themselves reduced the Estimates by £3,500,000. He was glad to see a promise of better things; if only hon. Gentlemen opposite would speak and press for economy the present reign of expenditure would come to an end. The increase in local rates during the last ten years amounted to nearer £50,000,000 or £60,000,000 than the £20,000,000 mentioned by the hon. Member opposite, and the additional burden in rates as well as in taxes was creating a situation of the utmost gravity.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was to be congratulated on having had a much pleasanter time with the Budget this year than last. His proposals were of a simple character, but from their very simplicity deserved careful attention. The right hon. Gentleman had taken off this year a tax which he

put on last year, and that, broadly speaking, was the Budget. What a foolish thing it was to put on a heavy burden against a strong body of opinion in the House one year, only to be forced to take it off the next. That tax, however, had not been taken off because the revenue of the country was improving, but simply because expenditure had been cut down. The national expenditure had become so swollen that there was no chance of relief except by the cutting down of expenditure. It was a curious fact that the most impressive discussions had been on matters not in the Finance Bill at all. There was a long debate on the sugar duty, and the closest division was on the coal tax, which was denounced by every speaker in the discussion. These facts were evidences that the discontent with the financial situation was very deep, and that much reform was needed. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer had spoken of introducing another Budget, it was well for the House to consider the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman on these matters. A great change had taken place since last year. On May 17th, 1904, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated—

“It has been said that I have not uttered one word in favour of economy. Those who have spoken most of economy have been responsible for the largest increases in taxation. . . . I do not think what we are spending on the Navy is an undue proportion considering the interests at stake. . . . As long as we are responsible we cannot buy present popularity by neglecting the defence of the Empire.”

Not the slightest comfort could be drawn from that speech by the advocates of economy. But on December 13th the right hon. Gentleman, addressing his constituents, said—

“No one was more impressed than he was with the need of husbanding our resources at the present time. It had become necessary that we should place some check on the expenditure. We must restrict our burden within the narrowest limits which were compatible with the discharge of the obligations we had undertaken.”

What had happened between May and December that the right hon. Gentleman should so change his tone? The speeches presented a great contrast, and the conduct of the Chancellor of the Exchequer this year had been in accordance with the change.

Sir Charles Renshaw.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said that when addressing his constituents he dwelt, exactly as he had done in the House, on the necessity of making whatever sacrifices were necessary to maintain our Imperial position.

MR. LOUGH did not think he had misrepresented the right hon. Gentleman, for while on May 17th he said that nothing could be taken off the Navy expenditure, it was that very Department which he had now selected for reduction to the extent of £3 500,000. It was encouraging for the advocates of economy to find that they were producing some effect on the Government, and that some progress had been made with the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The gravest feature of the situation was that the revenue of the country was no longer elastic. We were undergoing an experience to which we had not been accustomed for the last fifty years. From a most interesting Return recently issued dealing with the yield of certain taxes, it appeared that in 1898-99 the wine duties were at practically the same figure as in 1860. On the low duty of 1s. a gallon fixed by the French Treaty forty-five years ago a noble revenue had grown up amounting in 1898-99 to £1 400,000. In 899-1900 the duty was increased by 20 per cent. and the revenue had since fallen to £1,183,000. Thus an increase of 20 per cent. in the tax had resulted in a decrease of 25 per cent. in the revenue. That was a remarkable fact, proving that the reckless increase of taxation for which the Government were responsible, so far from benefiting the Treasury, had actually spoiled the yield of the taxes in certain directions. The same tendency was apparent in regard to other imports. The beer duty was increased by 15 per cent. and the revenue went up from £12,400,000 to £14,000,000, but this year it had fallen to £13,120,000. The worst result of all was shown in the revenue from spirits, where an increase of 5 per cent. in the duty had resulted in a decrease of yield from 25·4 millions to 22·1 millions, or a loss of £3,250,000 to the Exchequer. He might be asked whether it was not a good thing that the consumption of

wine, beer, and spirits should be decreased. But that was not the object with which the increased taxes were levied. The purpose of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to secure revenue, and instead of achieving that object he had damaged the consuming power of the country. Some hon. Members held that the high taxation of these articles was a healthy policy. If the view were a sound one, consumption having been checked with regard to wine and beer, it should be expanded in regard to other articles. But that was not the case. The consumption of tea had gone down since the tax was raised four or five years ago, and in every direction the consuming power of the people had decreased. It was absolutely useless trying to raise the taxes any higher, for what the people wanted was relief.

With regard to the changes which had been made and the condition of the money market, there was a slight boom visible when the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced his Budget, but it had all gone off now. There was another boom after the Japanese victory, but it had passed off again. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was collecting £3,000,000 a week in hard cash from the people by taxation and another £3,000,000 a week was being taken from them in rates. While the people had to find £6,000,000 a week how could there possibly be any development of new industrial enterprises? There was nothing but fear and anxiety in regard to the future. Why had the Chancellor of the Exchequer escaped so easily in regard to his Budget proposals? Simply because he took off a tax and corrected one of the mistakes he made last year by cutting down expenditure, and, to do this, above all things he chose the Navy. They were now spending £33,500,000 on the Navy and £30,000,000 on the Army, and if they added £5,000,000 for works, and £22,000,000 for India, that meant £90,500,000 which this country was asking for in hard cash for the maintenance of the Army and Navy this year. This was a cruel and wicked expenditure, and no country spending anything like this sum in a time of peace could prosper. In former times when Russia built a war-ship this country used to build two or

three, but now the Russian Army had been defeated and the Russian Navy swept away, and why could not the Government reduce the national expenditure now? The hon. Member for King's Lynn had stated that the Budget was not the proper place to discuss naval and military expenditure, and he said that the questions should be discussed upon the Estimates. As a matter of fact they got no opportunity on the Estimates because the questions did not come up in such a concrete form as upon the Budget. He urged the right hon. Gentleman to go round to the various Departments and warn them that they must not bring up any more Estimates in the spirit of last year. He might allow £22,000,000 for the Army and £25,000,000 for the Navy, and there might be some reduction in the Education Vote. The great spending Departments ought not to be allowed to run up huge bills. The only chance of the country returning to prosperity was for the the Government to largely cut down this bloated expenditure, for which they themselves were more responsible than anybody else.

*MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) said the debate which had taken place conclusively proved that in the opinion of the House the national expenditure, which had grown so enormously during the last ten years, ought to be effectively reduced. In the light of recent events he hoped such a reduction would have the immediate attention of the Government. He desired to see a very effective reduction, not only in the expenditure on the Army and Navy, but also in other branches of national expenditure. Upon this subject he did not propose to enter at length, as it had already been very fully discussed, but there was another matter in which a large number of those sitting on both sides of the House were interested, and that was the export duty upon coal. If the course of the debate on this measure had shown anything, it had proved that a change had come over the spirit of this House since the coal tax was introduced. At that time it was said that the coalowners were making great fortunes, but those who were closely associated with the coal trade

knew that they generally had two or three fat years and then two or three lean years, and now they had come to the lean years. Prices had gone down 3s. and 4s. a ton, and this tax on coal was crushing the coal industry in Scotland in particular. This tax affected Scotland, Northumberland, and the North of England very materially, whilst other districts, at the expense of the exporting areas, enjoyed immunity from this tax. Those districts whose trade was not dependent upon the export of coal paid no tax whatever. In Scotland the great bulk of the coal raised was sold at little over 7s. per ton, and he had always urged in this House that if the coal tax was to be permanent—which he sincerely hoped it would not—it ought to be imposed as an *ad valorem* tax. The price of Scotch coal was little more than half the price of Welsh coal, the best Welsh coal fetching 14s. per ton as compared with 7s. and 8s. per ton free on board for Scotch coal.

He thought the argument used when this tax was imposed that our national stock of coal was in danger of being exhausted had been effectively disposed of by the Royal Commission. There was no danger whatever of the prediction made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, when he imposed this tax, that our coal resources were getting perilously near exhaustion, being realised. What were the facts? It had been proved before the Royal Commission that there was no less than 101 thousand million tons of coal available in this country, or sufficient to last for 450 years at the present rate of consumption of 230 millions per annum. With the advance of science they did not know whether coal would even be wanted in the near future, and coal in another 200 or 300 years might be of no more value than the soil which covered it. He should continue to urge that this was a tax which ought to be abandoned. In the Transvaal Loan he thought they had ample security for doing away with the coal tax and for making up any deficiency by the abolition of the coal tax. There was no doubt that the gold mines of the Transvaal were perfectly able to pay that £30,000,000. Expert authorities had estimated that £5,000,000 a year would be saved to the

Mr. Lough.

mineowners by the abolition of the dynamite monopoly and other changes made since the war, and why should they attempt in any way to discourage the idea of the Transvaal paying this indemnity? Hon. Members who took that view took a very wrong view altogether. Enormous profits had accrued to these South African gold mineowners, and they ought to contribute largely towards the national expenditure.

The question he wished more particularly to raise was that Scotland had suffered a great injustice by not being allowed a rebate upon small coal. He pointed out to the House, when the coal tax was introduced, that this was an injustice, and more especially after the rebate was given to Welsh small coal when manufactured into patent fuel or briquettes. It was perfectly well-known that enormous sums of money had to be spent in Scotland upon machinery for the washing and screening of coal in order to prepare it for the market, and this added greatly to the cost. They sent this small coal abroad and consequently it came in for payment of the coal duty. In most cases, on account of the high rate of carriage, more especially from Lanarkshire and the West of Scotland—which amounted to something between 2s. 4d. and 2s. 8d. per ton—the small coal had to be sold at something like 7s. or 8s. per ton free on board, and thus, though the small coal if not treated and manufactured would be sold free on board at less than 6s. and thus be free of tax, yet it became liable. Therefore this small coal could only be sold at a loss. Now that attention had been called to this subject, he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give it his sympathetic consideration. He maintained that all small coal which would be sold free on board at a less price than 6s. if the cost of production were not put upon it ought to be exempt. It was to this point that he particularly wished to draw the attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said he was very glad the hon. Member had referred to the incidence of the coal tax in Scotland. He had no doubt that this matter would receive the sympathetic attention of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was sure the right

hon. Gentleman would also agree with the point he had brought before him the other day, namely, that there was not only the cost of putting up the mills for the washing of the coal, but also the onus of purifying rivers and streams which was put on the coalmasters, and which added very largely to the outlay necessary. He thought this added to the weight of the claim of the Scottish coal trade for the revision of this particular tax.

The hon. Baronet the Member for West Renfrewshire, in urging economy, referred to the expenditure on education as a branch on which money might be saved. In that he did not agree with the hon. Baronet. He believed there was money wasted on education, but he did not believe the total sum expended should be reduced. It should rather be added to. There was a waste of money owing to the sectarian system of education; there was waste upon school buildings in many districts; and there had been waste in the expenditure made by county councils in many directions in regard to education. But there must be further expenditure on secondary, technical, and University education if this country was to be able to hold its own in commercial competition. That was absolutely clear, and no one who had any knowledge of the manner in which secondary, technical, and University education had been developed abroad could believe that we, in the present position of education, could make any substantial saving upon that section of the Budget. He thought every effort should be made to stop the waste of money, and that the money which was at present wasted should be devoted to the development of higher education. Money might also be saved by a stricter audit of the accounts of public authorities in connection with education. The local debt of the country was certainly advancing rapidly. While he upheld communal enterprise as well as private enterprise, he did not think there was a sufficiently strict audit of public accounts. Several examples had become public lately, and he fancied there were a good many examples which had not become public. He had known many cases of money wasted by public authorities which would be prevented by a stricter audit. Certainly the audit of our national accounts was far stricter

than that in connection with local expenditure.

He understood that a Blue-book was in preparation by the Treasury giving information as to the graduation of income-tax in foreign countries. He wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the book was likely to be published soon. He did not mean to infer that foreign countries in this matter were on all fours with us, but as an inquiry had not been permitted into the question of the possibility of graduating the income-tax they would, at any rate, be glad to get the information as to the graduation in foreign countries. He entirely agreed with what was said by the hon. Baronet opposite with respect to Army expenditure. It was to that rather than to education that they should look for a saving. Of course it was almost impossible to come to any final opinion on the matter until we knew the time in case of difficulty on the Indian frontier within which troops could be placed on the frontier. Reference had been made to the saving of £3,500,000 on the Navy Estimates. That had been done by better administration in the Navy, and there were few who would not believe that a similar saving might be effected by better administration in the Army apart altogether from the question of maintaining, increasing, or reducing the number of troops. There had been a good deal of waste in Army administration, and that waste still continued. He instanced as one example the creation of barracks at stations like Aldershot. Under that head alone very large sums of money had been wasted. If due economy were exercised in the administration of the Army a substantial saving might be made, even assuming that a considerable additional reserve of strength was necessary.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said the discursive character of the debate resembled others during the progress of the Bill, and dealt with matters other than those contained in the clauses. The view of the hon. Member for West Islington as to the functions and duties of a Chancellor of the Exchequer differed very widely from

Mr. Munro Fergusson,

his own. The hon. Member appeared to be of opinion that a Chancellor of the Exchequer should cut down expenditure without regard to Departmental needs or the purposes for which the money was required.

MR. LOUGH: I did not say that.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said it seemed to him that was implied by the hon. Gentleman. What the hon. Gentleman said was that he as Chancellor of the Exchequer did not make up his mind how much should be spent, but that he actually waited until he heard what the Departments wanted. The plan which he followed was the more reasonable of the two, and he did not think the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman was one that would commend itself to any man who had had experience of office, and would conduce to the passing of Budget proposals in the House.

The hon. Member who opened the discussion dwelt on the amount contributed by Ireland to the common expenditure, and founded himself on the Report of the Royal Commission. But that Commission was appointed for a particular purpose—to advise on a scheme of finance applicable to a contemplated system of Home Rule. It was necessary, as the Commissioners said, to treat Great Britain and Ireland as separate financial entities, but it did not follow that, when we had not got Home Rule, and when Home Rule was not proposed, the separate treatment should be adopted. If the proposals of the hon. Member were carried out, Ireland would contribute nothing at all to the common expenses of the two countries. If the taxation were to be limited to a twentieth of the taxation of Great Britain, and if expenditure continued as largely in Ireland—and the Government were continually urged to spend more there—then instead of Ireland contributing anything to the common expenditure of the United Kingdom, she would remain a dead weight and represent a minus quantity in the contribution to the Imperial expenditure.

The hon. Member for Luton, traversing a very different field, animadverted on various proposals included in the Naval

and Military Works Acts, for which, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was not responsible before he took that office. He had contended that some of them would lose their value before the loans incurred in respect of them were paid off. The hon. Member misapprehended the financial position in regard to the Pacific cable. There was not only a sinking fund which was to pay off the debt contracted for the first laying of the cable, but, *pari passu*, the Treasury were laying aside about an equal sum almost every year to form a fund for laying a new cable or even to double the cable without borrowing if the existing cable was worn out. He could not say in what time the fund would produce a sum equal to the second cable but, speaking from memory, he believed it would probably be about forty years. The new naval scheme, so far as it affected Halifax, Bermuda, and Jamaica, would not have the consequences which the hon. Member anticipated. In fact, the hon. Gentleman had misapprehended altogether the effect of the new naval scheme. It was not suggested that Halifax should not have defences. In future the Dominion Government would take over those defences, and the money would not be wasted. Bermuda and Jamaica would remain, in certain contingencies, important naval stations and depôts, and expenditure on barracks and dockyards at those places could not be considered wasted. It was quite true that much less use would be made of them in time of peace than in the past, but the hon. Gentleman must not suppose that they would be of no use at all. He might say generally that the duration of all these loans had been fixed with regard to the duration of the works created by them, and he thought the hon. Member would find that the Treasury had not erred in their calculations. If they had erred at all they had erred on the side of caution in not attaching too long a life to the various works, buildings, or machinery paid for out of these loan funds.

He respectfully declined to follow the hon. Member for Plymouth into a further discussion of the question of the Transvaal contribution, because he had said all he could usefully say at present on the subject. But he deprecated these

assertions by hon. Gentlemen that we should never see any portion of that money. He thought prophecies of that kind could only tend to fulfil themselves. Those who made them on the floor of the House deprived themselves of any right to criticise the Home Government or the Transvaal Government if this contribution was never paid. For his part, he did not consider that the proposals which he had made would in any way interfere with the carrying out by the Transvaal of the obligation which rested upon honour, and he did not doubt that our fellow-citizens in the Transvaal would use their best endeavours to bear the share which it was agreed on their behalf that they should take of the great expenditure which the war in South Africa involved.

MR. GUEST said his point was that the right hon. Gentleman should have ignored this contribution for the purposes of his finances.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that was exactly what he had done. He was gratified to have the hon. Member's approval of the course he had taken.

The hon. Member for Ilkeston would find that the falling off in the importation of foreign cigarettes was practically as great between 1902 and 1903 as it was between 1903 and 1904. As the tax was only imposed last year, there must have been other causes at work to produce that result. These other causes were, he thought, the collapse of the attack on the English market by American manufacturers, and the agreement which they had entered into with the Imperial Tobacco Company in this country, by which they undertook not to send their goods into the United Kingdom. If the hon. Gentleman would look at the figures, he would see that the fall was almost entirely in the imports from the United States. In 1902 the imports were 309,000 lbs., in 1903 they were 162,000 lbs., and in 1904 only 19,000 lbs. That was the explanation of the great falling off in the importation of foreign cigarettes, though he did not doubt that amongst some of the cheaper qualities the tendency had been to import the whole leaf and manufacture the cigarettes here.

His hon. friend the Member for Renfrewshire drew attention to the level at which the income-tax stood and urged once more the importance of reducing it in the interests of trade and commerce. He had never concealed his feeling that the income-tax stood at too high a figure and that, both in the interests of trade and industry and the interests of sound national finance and what he might call the financial security of our war reserves, it ought to be reduced below the present figure. But he still remained of the opinion that it was his first duty to make an addition to the fixed debt-charge in order that a larger sum might be devoted to the reduction of debt. No one would rejoice more than he would when they could get the income-tax back to a more reasonable level. He had dealt with all the points raised, except two by hon. Gentlemen opposite who were not now present. But he might say that a Budget debate was not the proper time for an elaborate examination of naval, military, or educational expenditure. That must come on when the Estimates were considered.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) : Has the right hon. Gentleman not anything to say about the coal question ?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had nothing to add to the very full statement he had made the other night. Might he ask the hon. Gentleman to read his speech.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he thought the House would recognise that the right hon. Gentleman had on the whole dealt fairly with the different points brought forward in the debate. This debate to him, and he believed to the House generally, had been somewhat in the nature of a surprise in regard to the lines on which it had proceeded. He thought from the notice of Motion placed on the Paper by the hon. Member for Barnstaple that they were going to-day to have an indictment of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to his unfitness to discharge the duties of his office. He could only surmise that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Barnstaple was satisfied with the speech which the Chancellor of the Exchequer made the

other day, and that all the difficulties he had in his mind had been entirely removed. Presumably the Amendment was not in order, but that was no reason why the hon. Gentleman should have sacrificed his speech.

In regard to the Budget, he would say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, considering all the circumstances of the case, had brought forward a Budget which was fairly satisfactory. The two blots on it were more in the nature of a promise of the future attitude of the right hon. Gentleman. In the debate in Committee the right hon. Gentleman, as it were, closed the door against any demand for a graduation of the income-tax. Now, he heard that declaration with some regret. No one supposed that graduation could have been dealt with in the present Budget ; but it was a reasonable contention that a person with £300,000 or £400,000 a year should pay more income-tax proportionally than a person whose income depended upon his daily labour. If that were possible in other countries, it ought to be possible in this country ; but the right hon. Gentleman had shut out all hope of the question being dealt with. Another declaration of the right hon. Gentleman was that the war taxes were to be continued in future without any reference to the fact that they were introduced as war taxation. That was a most important departure. Hitherto, it was generally understood that these taxes would be removed at the earliest possible opportunity. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol left the House distinctly under the impression that these were temporary taxes.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that his right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol stated in debate that his great difficulty was, not war expenditure, but the expenditure which would remain after the war, and that he must, therefore, broaden the basis of taxation. It was quite true when his right hon. friend made the first increases in 1900 that he expressed the hope that they would be short lived ; but the next year he explained he was unable to repeal those taxes, and even had to impose fresh

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

taxation. He also repeatedly pointed out the difficulties which would follow after the war.

Mr. DALZIEL said that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol did express the hope that these taxes would be short lived; and surely the House was correct in concluding that they were of a temporary character. Nine out of every ten hon. Members were of opinion that the first duty of the Government would be, after the war, to devote themselves to the reduction of the war taxation. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had departed from that standpoint; and now they were told that it was a mistake to regard this as war taxation. That was a matter for regret.

He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman a Question with regard to the war contribution from the Transvaal. He quite understood the right hon. Gentleman deprecating discussion on the subject, on the ground that it would not help him to get this money; but the House was entitled to know what hope he had that it would be paid, or whether the matter was to be allowed to drift entirely until a new Government came into office and had the responsibility removed to their shoulders. Only the other day the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham stated that it would be an insult to the Boers to expect them to willingly contribute this money. That was a statement which would not assist in getting this contribution. He could imagine a Boer majority in the Representative Council in the Transvaal regarding it as their charter for refusing to vote this money. In his opinion, the right hon. Gentleman closed the door against any contribution. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had had many opportunities of bringing home to the Transvaal that this money should be paid. The right hon. Gentleman had taken part in raising money for the Transvaal; and he ought to consider the contribution as a realisable asset. The position in which the question was now being left was very unsatisfactory indeed; and probably another opportunity would be taken of impressing on the right hon. Gentleman what his duty ought to be. The contribution was part of a bargain entered into between the right hon.

Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, on behalf of this country, and the Rand magnates; and the late Colonial Secretary received the gratitude of the people on his return to this country for having arranged this contribution. If the Rand magnates entered into that bargain they ought to keep it.

Then as regarded the Colonies and the Navy, did the right hon. Gentleman ever suggest that the Colonies should bear a portion of the naval expenditure of this country. They heard a great deal nowadays about the enthusiasm of the Colonies for the mother country; but was it not time that they should pay part of the expenditure which was incurred by the taxpayer of this country in protecting them? It was suggested that the question should be discussed by the representatives of the Colonies. Would the right hon. Gentleman put it in the forefront of the programme for the next Colonial Conference? With regard to war taxation and the failure of the Colonies to contribute to the Navy, they had reason to be dissatisfied with the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman; and in order to emphasise his protest he would move that the Bill be read a third time that day six months.

*MR. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry) said that he desired to second the Motion. The expenditure of the country had been increasing by leaps and bounds. Since the commencement of the war the revenue taxes had increased by £25,000,000. Taxation on the necessities of life pressed most heavily on the people least able to bear it, viz., the classes which had to work for their daily bread. They were piling up indirect taxes one by one, and the result was that they were curtailing the prosperity of the country by diminishing its purchasing power. The prosperity of the country depended on the working classes having money to spend; but if 4d. or 6d. a week were deducted by indirect taxes their purchasing power was correspondingly diminished. Further, the piling up of indirect taxes was a most insidious form of taxation. The people did not know what it was that was diminishing their purchasing power. They might think it was hard times; it was,

however, indirect taxation, largely due to the Imperialism of the last few years, which had been a curse to this country. It had resulted in largely increased expenditure on the Army and Navy; but that did not mean efficiency. The Japanese Navy, for the three years preceding the Russo-Japanese War, cost only £10,000,000, whereas the Russian Navy, which was practically annihilated, cost £35,000,000 for the same period. It was not expenditure that secured efficiency. In the time of Elizabeth our expenditure was very small as compared with the nations opposed to us. The great resource of a nation was small expenditure, and a great reserve to be called upon in time of trouble. There were £8,000,000 or £9,000,000, for which no provision was made in this Bill, which would have to be provided by adding to the Debt. Broadening the basis of taxation really meant narrowing the means of subsistence and, that being so, he objected to it. In regard to the taxation of the ordinary necessities of life, he believed in the old theory that a man should not be taxed until after he had had his dinner, and he would also add nor a woman until she had had her tea, and he sincerely hoped that the time was coming when these taxes on commodities would be abolished.

With regard to the question of graduated income-tax, he himself had been an Assistant Commissioner of Income-tax, and knew of what he was speaking when he said he was perfectly convinced that there was no difficulty whatever in evolving a scheme of graduated income-tax. It could be easily done by putting a surplus charge on the individual, because those who were called the "big fish" were well known to the income-tax officials. But he was more concerned in the reduction of expenditure. He hoped to see a return to a system of common-sense and the getting rid of this "Imperialism," which had been a source of such expenditure and such a burden to the country.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words, 'upon this day six months.'"—(Mr. Dalziel.)

Mr. Bright.

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) said if he were an Englishman he should not have considered this Budget a bad one, because the right hon. Gentleman had, so far as in him lay, reduced the burden of taxation and had established a sinking fund for the repayment of loans. But looking at it from the Irish point of view, which was the only point of view from which he regarded Imperial expenditure, he could not see that the observations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer left much hope of there being any reduction in taxation in favour of Ireland. He regarded the present Chancellor of the Exchequer as much more unsympathetic with regard to Irish economic questions than his predecessors. Though the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol did not do very much for Ireland his utterances were always sympathetic. Such utterances, even, did not come from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. From him they had a cold, unsympathetic, and, from the Irish standpoint, a hopeless view of the situation. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol imposed the coal tax he called attention to the fact that although that tax brought in £2,000,000 revenue it did not impose a penny of extra taxation on Ireland. The present Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised on the first opportunity to take off the coal tax, and if that were done, instead of commencing with some of those taxes which affected Ireland, he would regard that as an injustice. Even that evening the Chancellor of the Exchequer had called attention to the fact that the Royal Commission which recommended that Ireland should only pay one-twentieth of the Imperial expenditure was appointed by a Government which included Home Rule in their programme. It was not the Home Rule Bill which influenced the Royal Commission in its findings. It was the careful inquiry, perhaps the most careful that had ever taken place, into the economic condition of Ireland and the capacity of the people to be taxed, that led them to the conclusion at which they arrived. That Royal Commission sat ten years ago, and in the years that had intervened

between then and now the taxable capacity of Great Britain had increased, whilst that of Ireland had decreased, and was decreasing more rapidly every day.

The test of the poverty of a country was the emigration of the people because they could not live at home, and from Ireland the people were rushing away in ever-increasing numbers year by year. In the first three months of this year 12,000 left the country, as against 9,000 in the corresponding period of last year. Another test of the wealth of a country was the railway receipts. The receipts of English railways went up year by year, but in Ireland they were falling. He himself did not believe that even yet Ireland had touched the bottom in national decay. With regard to direct and indirect taxation, so far as England was concerned taxation was about equally divided between direct and indirect taxation, but so far as Ireland was concerned indirect taxation amounted to some 79 per cent. of the whole, whilst direct taxation was only 21 per cent. If such a thing as that occurred in England the whole country would be up in arms against the tax; the whole population, the poorest of the poor, would rise against it. These figures in themselves proved that not only was the taxation of Ireland unjust, but the system of finance which taxed the poor to such excess was not sound.

Surprise was sometimes expressed that Nationalist Members should object to contributing so much to Imperial taxation seeing that Ireland was benefited by being protected against foreign invasion. Even admitting that that were so, in what way was Ireland more protected than the Colonies? £500,000 was being spent on the West Indies this year, but the people of Ireland were unable to get an extra gunboat to protect their fisheries. While Canada did not contribute a cent. towards the cost of the Navy, Ireland was taxed to such an extent that the people were being driven from the country. Australia contributed £30,000 against Ireland's £3,000,000, and nothing could be got out of South Africa. He submitted that

Ireland had a legitimate ground of complaint in this matter.

In reply to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's declaration that differential Customs could not be levied as between the two countries, he might point out that the Irish Custom-house was not established until 1859, and that there were means by which Ireland could be relieved apart from Customs duties. As to the contention that the excessive taxation was counter-balanced by excessive expenditure, the Nationalist Members were not responsible in the smallest degree for the government of the country; their suggestions were never adopted by the House, and the sole responsibility must rest upon the benches opposite. That being so, it was most unfair for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that the excessive taxation was set off by the excessive expenditure in Ireland. The Irish people could not in any way be held responsible, as the government of the country was inspired by half-a-dozen Members, representing only a very small section of the people. He deeply regretted the thoroughly unsympathetic attitude which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had adopted in reference to the Irish financial grievances.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would be able to reassure the House as to the attitude now being taken up by the Treasury in regard to expenditure. During the last few years Treasury control had not been as strict as it used to be, or as careful as it ought to be. Until recently the great safeguard of the national finances had been the watchfulness of the Treasury; but it was necessary to go back no farther than the Estimates of the present year to see how that watchfulness had been relaxed. There was the question of entering upon schemes involving expenditure without the authorisation of Parliament. For instance, the Treasury had given permission for the spending of £4,000 on Whale Island, knowing full well that it involved a further expenditure of £30,000 during the present year, and not a penny of that expenditure had been authorised by this House. An assurance ought to be given that the Treasury intended to abandon this laxity of control

and to revert to their earlier and better practice of strictly forbidding the initiation of great schemes by spending Departments until authority had been given by the House of Commons. There was also the Rosyth case, in regard to which the House did not know how matters stood. Were the Treasury refusing to allow any further expenditure there until the matter had been placed fully before Parliament? One of the evil results of the war was that having been repeatedly overridden by the urgent demands of the military and naval Departments, the Treasury appeared to have lost the grip it used to have over the natural tendency of Departments to spend money far too easily.

Stricter supervision was required also in regard to appropriations-in-aid. Recently, by the assistance of appropriations-in-aid, an Estimate really for £1,500,000 had been made to appear as for only £500,000. Departments were pressed to realise so-called surplus stores in order to swell the appropriations-in-aid, and thus to decrease the net amount of the Estimates, with the result that great waste ensued. That would probably be found to account for some of the waste in South Africa, where stores were sold at half price and bought back immediately after the turn of the financial year, so that the expenditure came into a different annual account. He appealed to the Treasury to resume its old position as the watch-dog of national finance, and to remove the idea that the spending Departments had only to press hard enough to cause the Treasury to give way.

Without going into details of taxation he might point out how entirely the prophecy of the hon. Member for North Bristol with regard to the duty on stripped tobacco had been carried out. He then told the House that one half-penny per lb. would cover any proper differentiation between the duties on whole leaf and stripped tobacco. Every thing that had happened since then had fully confirmed his judgment, and one of the features of this Budget was that everybody but the Chancellor of the Exchequer had admitted that a great mistake was made when that differentiation in the tax was made. He hoped the hon. Member for North Bristol would again

be able to give the House the benefit of his expert knowledge in regard to this tax before the debate upon the Budget closed, because the tax was unjust and unfair to a large body of men who were engaged in the same trade as the hon. Member opposite.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said they had often been told that certain parties in South Africa undertook to underwrite a loan of £30,000,000 to pay to this country; but the House ought to know who was to raise the loan. Until they knew that, the underwriting of the loan was a matter of no moment whatever. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was in his place, he hoped he would tell the House who were the parties with whom he made his bargain. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol had told them that if this transaction had been properly carried out the Government ought to have entered into an undertaking as to when and under what circumstances this loan would be raised. Before they proceeded to a division he hoped they would have a full explanation from somebody who knew all the circumstances.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock) thought it was unfortunate that speeches such as they had just listened to, questioning the *bona fides* of people in South Africa, should go forth from that House. He regretted that speeches should be made in the House of Commons which would probably go forth and be repeated in South Africa, even suggesting to those who happened to read them that there was no moral obligation whatever on the part of the people of the Transvaal to fulfil the terms of the arrangement made at the end of a devastating war, an arrangement which, up to the present moment, they had no reason whatever for believing would not be faithfully and honourably fulfilled. He regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was unable to make a larger remission in taxation, but he believed the right hon. Gentleman had done the best he could in the interest of sound finance and with just regard to all classes of the people. He rejoiced in the reduction of the tax upon tea, because he felt

that it was necessary to reduce some of these duties in order to maintain the financial credit of the country. He regretted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not able to reduce the income-tax. Had it not been for the reduced revenue from liquor, the right hon. Gentleman would no doubt have been able to lower the income-tax. But while regretting that there had been no remission of the income-tax, he was sure they would all rejoice to hear of the reduced drinking habits of the people, although it had caused some inconvenience to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and to the revenue.

He was bound to admit that he regarded with some apprehension the large expenditure of the country, and he hoped the Government would do what they could, while maintaining the efficiency of the public services, to reduce expenditure. On the other hand, he could not help remembering that much of that expenditure had arisen in reference to the Army, in making better provision for the men and giving them better pay. This expenditure was absolutely necessary if they desired to maintain the British Army in a state of efficiency, and if they wished to avoid conscription. With regard to the expenditure upon the Navy, it seemed a big sum, but having regard to the crisis through which they had been passing the fact that they possessed a strong and an efficient Navy had been of great value to this country. He ventured to say that but for the fact that they had got such a strong Navy there would have been a great danger of complications abroad, and perhaps a serious and a very expensive war. He noticed that hon. Members opposite were very strong just now in their advocacy of the further reduction in the tea duty, but when the Party opposite were in power they placed the tea tax at 6d. per lb. year after year, and that occurred in time of peace. The Unionist Government reduced the tea tax to 4d., at which figure it remained until it was raised to meet the expenses of the war. Therefore, the great enthusiasm of hon. Members opposite for economy was of very recent birth, because if only one-third of the claims they had brought before the House had been granted the national

expenditure would have been very much higher than it was at the present time. Speaking as a business man he wished to say that the method of dealing with Supply in this House was unbusinesslike, and did not tend, in his opinion, towards the promotion of economy. It was true that at the beginning of the session a certain number of days were set apart for Supply—

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a matter relating to the rules of the House, and it cannot be dealt with now.

MR. SPEAR urged the Government to exercise a closer supervision over national expenditure, in order that economy might be observed. They were all agreed that the Army and Navy should be maintained in a state of complete efficiency so that they should be able to protect their interests wherever they might be attacked.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said the few remarks which the hon. Member opposite had just made had convinced him that the Army and Navy was a subject about which they talked a great deal too much. He could not imagine anything more mischievous than the comparisons which had been made during the discussions in this House between our Army and Navy and those of foreign countries, and the suggestions as to what this country would do in certain eventualities. As long as the country was satisfied that the Army and Navy were sufficiently strong the less they said about the matter in that House and outside of it the better.

Many hon. Members thought that the negotiations with regard to the loan had been conducted with a singular want of knowledge, business capacity, and ordinary commonsense. The negotiator came back with a great account of what had been done, and as to the promises to pay in the future. Those promises had been sharply criticised in this House. It had been pointed out that they were illusory, and that the nature of the security was absolutely worthless. It had never been made clear inside this House, or outside of it, that there was any

person in South Africa responsible for this money. He wished to direct the attention of the House to the necessity of sending out an impartial Commission to find out the position of affairs there. He was told on what he regarded as unimpeachable authority that the state of affairs in that country was intolerable.

Referring to the tea duty the hon. Member said it should be remembered that it represented 100 per cent. on the market value of the article. It was outrageous that this country should put such a duty on an article which came so largely from our own Colonies. If we were to have colonial preference now was the time, when it could be given on tea, for the great bulk of it came from our own possessions, and gave employment to our own people. The feeling which was engendered among our fellow-citizens in Ceylon and India on account of this enormous imposition was very injurious to the best interests of this country. The duty was the same on all qualities of tea, and it was inequitable that the poor, who bought low-priced tea, should pay at the same rate as the rich, who used tea at 3s. or 4s., or it might be £3 or £4 per pound. In regard to all articles of luxury there ought to be an *ad valorem* duty, so that the consumer would contribute to the revenue in proportion to the value of the commodities he consumed. At present the poor had to pay through the nose for what they consumed, while the rich escaped their fair contribution. He was not sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not reduced the income-tax. He would have brought more money into the Treasury if he had introduced a system of graduation. There were people with great incomes who really did not know how to spend their money. They wasted it in the most scandalous and sinful way, and it would be very much better if it went into the Treasury instead of being thrown away.

*MR. MARKS (Kent, Thanet) said he thought the House would regard with great and sympathetic interest the speech of the hon. Member for South Kilkenny as to the distressful condition of Ireland. It certainly appeared from what the hon. Member said that the

people of Ireland had great cause of complaint. No doubt the general feeling was that Ireland was taxed, if not unfairly, at any rate in excess of the means and resources of her people. That condition of things unfortunately was not confined to Ireland. A similar complaint might be made by the inhabitants of this country. The conditions which had led to that state of things were not far to seek. When one heard of trade languishing, employment scarce and uncertain, difficulty arising from public burdens, and increasing want among the people, it appeared that there was something radically wrong, something rotten in the State. The hon. Member for South Kilkenny had complained that the state of affairs in Ireland received little notice or sympathy from this House. He ventured to say that a debate on the Third Reading of a Finance Bill did not afford a very convenient opportunity for dealing with the subject, and it was perhaps regrettable that the grievances of Ireland had been brought forward at this time and in this way. He suggested that a better test of the sympathy of the House would be obtained if the hon. Member for South Kilkenny or some of his friends were to bring forward a Motion for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the economic condition of Ireland. If the work of the Committee were properly carried out, as no doubt it would be, and if such evidence as the hon. Member was in a position to place before it were given, the House would be in a position to judge of the effects of the economic conditions in Ireland, and to apply some remedy. The hon. Gentleman with whom the Member for Kilkenny acted would no doubt support a Motion for such a Committee. He thought the suggestion would find a great deal of sympathy on that side of the House.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had some hard things to say of the colliery proprietors in this country as to the way in which they neglected to prepare the coal for the market so as to enable them to hold their own with the output from the Westphalian coalfields. The right hon. Gentleman specially referred to the

washing of coal nuts, and pointed out that in Westphalia expensive machinery had been erected and precautions taken to ensure that the coal before being placed on the market was properly cleaned and sorted out so as to render it most adapted to the needs of the consumer. But the right hon. Gentleman omitted to say that if the colliery owner in this country erected expensive machinery for the purpose of washing and sorting out coal, thereby increasing its market value, he brought himself within the scope of the coal tax, and was fined for his industry and enterprise. If low-priced coal was washed and exported, the shilling tax handicapped the exporters in the neutral markets of the world. The Chancellor of the Exchequer should have assured himself that he was not putting by this tax an impediment in the way of the enterprise of the colliery owners of this country. The right hon. Gentleman had stated frequently in the debates on this Bill that he received £2,000,000 a year from the coal tax, which sum was required by the financial condition of the country, and that no suitable substitute for the coal tax had yet been suggested which would bring in the same amount. Everything depended on what was meant by a suitable substitute. Over and over again it had been pointed out that a penny per ton on all coal raised in this country—half to be paid by the colliery owners and half by the mineral owners who received the royalties—would yield £2,000,000 per annum. But the difference would be this: that a halfpenny per ton would come from the rents of the royalty owners and a halfpenny per ton from the profits of the colliery owners, whereas the shilling per ton duty on exported coal came out of the colliers' wages. The Chancellor of the Exchequer held that that was no proper substitute for the coal tax in its present form. It was significant that the whole method of our financial relations—whether in Ireland or Great Britain—so operated that the burden of taxation was made to press with undue severity on the poor.

The hon. Member for Tavistock said that if the schemes which were propounded on this side of the House were to be agreed to, the national

expenditure would be considerably increased, and further taxation would be necessary. He ventured to say that if all the schemes which had ever been propounded on this side of the House had become law during the last twenty years, they would not have entailed as much expense as the recent criminal war in South Africa. Moreover, there would have been something to show for the expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, speaking on Saturday night, said that the working classes did not easily forget anything which had been of benefit to them. The remark was true; but neither did they forget readily when anything had been done which was of disadvantage to them. When they had been misled once, they were not likely to allow themselves to be misled a second time from the same quarter and by the same authority. The result of the recent elections showed that while the working classes had been misled by specious fallacies concerning the war which had cost the country so very dear, they were not going to be misled again by economic fallacies from the same quarter. In regard to this question of increased expenditure there was a Bill now before the House which, according to the estimate made by the Home Office, would cost the country some £30,000 for its administration.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said the hon. Gentleman must confine himself to the subject of the Finance Bill.

MR. KEIR HARDIE said he would confine himself to past expenditure, but he only wanted to show that the proposals made by the Government themselves would mean extra expenditure.

As to the income-tax, the hon. Member for Tavistock expressed regret that it had not been reduced. He joined in that expression of regret in so far as salaries under £500 a year were concerned. It had always seemed to him that people who earned a salary by professional services should not be classed on the same scale as people who derived large incomes—whether by war in South Africa, by swindling contracts, or by oppressing and grinding

down the workers in this country. Therefore, he would have welcomed a reduction of the income-tax on those whose incomes were under the figure he had named, provided that the depletion of the revenue falling to the Chancellor of the Exchequer by that reduction, had been made up by an increased tax upon higher incomes. It was perfectly ridiculous for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or for anyone with the slightest pretension to the understanding of finance and of the incidence of taxation, to stand up and proclaim that a graduated income-tax was not, in practice, easy of application. Suppose that the incidence of taxation were the other way, and that the graduation was going to make the tax fall more heavily on the poor, a thousand and one means would be found to carry out that graduation. But because graduation promised to relieve the poor and the lower middle classes, and to place the burden of taxation more equitably on the shoulders of those most able to bear it, then they were told that there was no way to apply the graduation.

He did not think the time spent on these questions of a graduated income-tax and the remission of the coal tax had been at all wasted at a period like the present when the wages in the coal trade had been going down and with every prospect of their continuing to go down. Surely the Government in general, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer in particular, should remember that he was the son of the only Labour Member in the House, and the right hon. Gentleman might see his way to ease the pressure a little on the working colliers. He should have thought that a sense of filial responsibility and duty would have led the right hon. Gentleman to do

this good turn to his distinguished father. The colliers of the country objected to this tax, which ought never to have been imposed, and which should be removed at once. It was because he believed it was an improper tax, and one which put an extra burden on the rates in order to afford relief to people whose guilty conduct in the House and out of it had rendered it in the first case necessary, that he opposed it. He hoped that the tax would be removed when another Budget was introduced.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs) said that the right hon. Gentleman had referred him to *Hansard* for his views on the coal tax but that number of *Hansard* had not yet been issued. Referring to *The Times* report, however, he found that the right hon. Gentleman stated that he was unable to accept the views of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North-West Lanark to exempt Scottish coal-owners from the tax on small coal. This coal was a great asset to the nation. Formerly, thousands of tons of this class of coal were left in the mines.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman is not in order in repeating the arguments he has already used.

MR. JOHN WILSON said he only wished to state that the tax was a peculiar hardship in Scotland. The manufacturers of Welsh patent fuel were exempt and the Scottish manufacturers should be given equality of treatment.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 216; Noes, 132. (Division List No. 194.)

AYES.

Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)

Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barry, Sir F. T. (Windsor)
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middl'x)
Brassey, Alber^t

Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St John
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J.A. (Glasgow)
Carlile, William Walter
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J.A. (Worc.)
Chapman, Edward
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.

Mr. Keir Hardie.

Coddington, Sir William
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Colston, Chas. E. H. Athole
 Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Denny Colonel
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir F.
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, Sir William Theodore
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
 Faber, George Denison (York)
 Fellowes, Rt. Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man-
 c'r
 Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
 Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'n'ss B'ghs
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 FitzGerald, Sir R. Penrose
 Fitzroy, Hn. Edw. Algernon
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, Philip S. (Warwick, SW
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gardner, Ernest
 Garfit William
 Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
 Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
 Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
 Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry SEdm'nds
 Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
 Greene, W. Raymond (Camps.
 Grenfell, William Henry
 Grettton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Guthrie, Walter Murray
 Hain, Edward
 Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
 Hamilton, Marq of ((L'nd'nd'ry
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
 Hay, Hon. Claude George
 Heath, Sir J. (Staffords, N.W.
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hoare, Sir Samuel
 Hogg, Lindsay

Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
 Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham
 Hozier, Hn. Jas. Henry Cecil
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hunt, Rowland
 Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
 Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
 Kenyon, Hn. G. T. (Denbigh)
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W
 Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Sir J. (Monm'th)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, Hn. H. L.W. (Mile End
 Lawson, J. Grant (Yorks, N.R.)
 Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham
 Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas, Col. F. (Lowestoft)
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
 Macdona, John Cumming
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Calmont, Colonel James
 M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W
 Majendie, James A. H.
 Mannors, Lord Cecil
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Milner, Rt. Hon. Sir Fredk. G.
 Milvain, Thomas
 Mitchell, William (Burnley)
 Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants
 Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow
 Morpeth, Viscount
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
 Muntz, Sir Philip A.
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
 Parker, Sir Gilbert
 Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George

Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Remnant, James Farquharson
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Ridley, S. Forde
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. T.
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse
 Seely, Chas. Hilton (Lincoln)
 Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
 Smith, Rt. Hn. J. Parker (Lanarks
 Spear, John Ward
 Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset
 Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
 Stroyan, John
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
 Taylor, Austin (East Toxeth)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Turnour, Viscount
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (Sheffield
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. J. C. E. (Taunton
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Wills, Sir Fredk. (Bristol, N.)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
 Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
 Wrightson, Sir Thomas
 Yerburch, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
 Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Barran, Rowland Hirst
 Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
 Bell, Richard

Benn, John Williams
 Black, Alexander William
 Blake, Edward
 Boland, John
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Brigg, John
 Burke, E. Haviland

Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, N.E. (York, NR Whitby
 Buxton, Sydney Chas. (Poplar
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Robert
 Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Channing, Francis Allston

Cheetham, John Frederick
 Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
 Cremer, William Randal
 Delany, William
 Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Duncan, J. Hastings
 Edwards, Frank
 Elibank, Master of
 Ellice, Capt. EC (S'ndrw's B'ghs)
 Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
 Emmott, Alfred
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
 Fenwick, Charles
 Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Furness, Sir Christopher
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Grant, Corrie
 Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
 Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
 Harcourt, Lewis
 Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
 Harwood, George
 Hayden, John Patrick
 Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
 Helme, Norval Watson
 Higham, John Sharp
 Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
 Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea)
 Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)

Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
 Labouchere, Henry
 Lambert, George
 Lamont, Norman
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Lough, Thomas
 Lyell, Charles Henry
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Hugh, Patrick A.
 M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
 M'Laren, Sir Chas. Benjamin
 Mooney, John J.
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murphy, John
 Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
 Norman, Henry
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
 O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Malley, William
 O'Mara, James
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
 Richards, Thomas
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Roe, Sir Thomas

Russell, T. W.
 Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Shackleton, David James
 Shaw, Chas. Edw. (Stafford)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
 Slack, John Bamford
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Soares, Ernest J.
 Spencer, Rt. Hn C R (Northants)
 Stanhope, Hn. Philip James
 Strachey, Sir Edward
 Sullivan, Donal
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Sir A (Glamorgan, E.)
 Toulmin, George
 Villiers, Ernest Amherst
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
 White, George (Norfolk)
 White, Luke (York, E.R.)
 Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
 Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
 Wilson, Chas. Henry (Hull, W.)
 Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestershire, N.)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr.
 Dalziel and Mr. Bright.

Main Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 215 ;
 Noes, 143. (Division List No. 195.)

AYES.

Allsopp, Hon. George
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
 Arrol, Sir William
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
 Bailey, James (Walworth)
 Balcarres, Lord
 Baldwin, Alfred
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Mane'r)
 Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
 Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
 Banbury, Sir Frederick George
 Barry, Sir F. T. (Windsor)
 Bartley, Sir George C. T.
 Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
 Bignold, Sir Arthur
 Bill, Charles
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bond Edward
 Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
 Boulnois, Edmund
 Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Midd'l'x)
 Brassey, Albert
 Bredrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Butcher, John George

Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cautley, Henry Strother
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc.)
 Chapman, Edward
 Coates, Edward Feetham
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coddington, Sir William
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim S.)
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Cross, Herb Shepherd (Bolton)
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Darymple, Sir Charles
 Davernport, William Bromley
 Denny, Colonel
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon

Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
 Doxford, Sir William Theodore
 Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Faber, George Denison (York)
 Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Mane'r)
 Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
 Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'n'ss B'ghs)
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
 Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gardner, Ernest
 Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
 Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
 Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
 Goschen, Hon. George J.
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S'Edm'ds)
 Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)

Grenfell, William Henry
 Gretton, John
 Guthrie, Walter Murray
 Hain, Edward
 Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
 Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nd'ry
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
 Hay, Hon. Claude George
 Heath, Sir J. (Staffords, N.W.)
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hoare, Sir Samuel
 Hogg, Lindsay
 Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
 Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham
 Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hunt, Rowland
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
 Jessel, Captain Herb. Merton
 Kenyon, Hn. G. T. (Denbigh)
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W
 Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Sir J. (Monm'th)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, Hn. H. L. W. (Mile End
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks. NR
 Lee, Arthur H. (Hants Fareham
 Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 McAlmont, Colonel James
 M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W

Majendie, James A. H.
 Malcolm, Ian
 Manners, Lord Cecil
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Mildmay, Francis Bingham
 Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Fredk. G.
 Milvain, Thomas
 Mitchell, William (Burnley)
 Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
 Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
 Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
 Morpeth, Viscount
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
 Muntz, Sir Philip A.
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
 Parker, Sir Gilbert
 Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Remnant, James Farquharson
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Renwick, George
 Ridley, S. Forde
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye

Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Roysds, Clement Molyneux
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
 Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
 Smith, Rt. Hn. J. Parker (Lanarks
 Spear, John Ward
 Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
 Stewart, Sir Mark J.M. Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stroyan, John
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
 Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Turnour, Viscount
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (Sheffield
 Walrod, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-and-Lyne
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Wills, Sir Fredk. (Bristol, N.)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wilson-Todd, Sir WH (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath
 Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
 Wrightson, Sir Thomas
 Yerburch, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
 Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Barran, Rowland Hirst
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Bell, Richard
 Benn, John Williams
 Black, Alexander William
 Blake, Edward
 Boland, John
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Brigg, John
 Bright, Allan Heywood
 Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burns, John
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, N.E. (York NR, Whitby
 Buxton, Sydney Chas. (Poplar
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Robert

Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
 Cremer, William Randal
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
 Delany, William
 Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Duncan, J. Hastings
 Edwards, Frank
 Elibank, Master of
 Ellice, Capt E.C. (S. Andw's Bghs
 Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
 Emmott, Alfred
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
 Eve, Harry Trelawney
 Fenwick, Charles
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith
 Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)

Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Furness, Sir Christopher
 Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
 Grant, Corrie
 Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
 Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
 Harcourt, Lewis
 Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
 Harwood, George
 Hayden, John Patrick
 Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
 Helme, Norval Watson
 Higham, John Sharp
 Hobhouse, C.E.H. (Bristol, E.)
 Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, David Brynmor (Swansea

Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W
 Kitson, Sir James
 Lambert, George
 Lamont Norman
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Lough, Thomas
 Lyell, Charles Henry
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Hugh, Patrick A.
 M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
 M'Laren, Sir Chas. Benjamin
 Mooney, John J.
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murphy, John
 Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
 Norman, Henry
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Nussey, Thomas Willans

O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Malley, William
 O'Mara, James
 Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
 Perks, Robert William
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford
 Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
 Richards, Thomas
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Roe, Sir Thomas
 Russell, T.W.
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Shackleton, David James
 Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
 Slack, John Bamford
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soares, Ernest J.

Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R. (Northants
 Strachey, Sir Edward
 Sullivan, Donal
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas Abel (Carmarthen, E.
 Thomas Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
 Toulmin, George
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Villiers, Ernest Amherst
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
 White, George (Norfolk)
 White, Luke (York, E.R.)
 Whiteley, George (York, W.R.)
 Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
 Wilson, Chas. Henry (Hull, W.
 Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, J.W. (Worcestersh. N.
 Woodhouse, Sir J.T. (Huddersf'd

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr.
 Goddard and Mr. Herbert
 Samuel.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

SUPPLY (18TH MAY).

Resolution reported.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,905,200, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants-in-Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906."

Resolution read a second time.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he intended to move a reduction of £10,000 upon this Vote. A long discussion ensued when this Vote was considered in Committee because they were not able to make certain figures agree. After the interval which had taken place he hoped the representative of the Government would be able to make those figures come into harmony one with the other. The first item he wished to refer to was a large sum to be expended at Whale Island. He asked a Question on the point in Committee, and he was informed that £4,000 was taken last year for this purpose without the authority of the

House, with the result that they were led into an expenditure of £30,000 or £35,000 without any decision having been come to in the House in regard to it. He wished to protest against that method of procedure. What was the use of having Vote 10 and Naval Works Bills when they found large expenditures of this kind entered upon by a Department going quietly to the Treasury for authority to spend a small sum and then coming to the House and telling them that as the work had been started they must have a larger sum to finish it. That was an instance of the loss of control of the Treasury which had come about in recent years over the expenditure of the various Departments. He hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would put on his sternest manner, if he had one, when these Departments came to him asking for money. Whenever any of these Departments came to the hon. Gentleman in this way he should insist that the matter must be decided upon by the House before any expenditure was incurred. There were dozens of cases of this kind in the Estimates, and even the Comptroller and Auditor-General had to spend a large amount of his time protesting against expenditure of this kind.

Another item he wished to protest against was the proposed expenditure in regard to Wei-hai-Wei. The case was quite strong enough against this expenditure during the Committee stage, but

surely the events of the last few days had made the case stronger still against incurring any further expenditure at Wei-hai-Wei, for they did not know whether at the end of the present financial year they would be in possession of the place or not. Wei-hai-Wei was granted to them on a lease so long as the Russians held Port Arthur, but they did not hold Port Arthur to-day. He thought the Government ought to wait until the end of the war to see whether some other arrangement would be made. What folly it was to spend £6,000 upon dredging this bathing establishment which might not be theirs even for bathing purposes at the end of the financial year. With regard to the residence for the Commander-in-Chief at Chatham, would the Secretary to the Admiralty furnish the House with a plan in order that they might see the kind of palace that was being built for this purpose. Since he referred to this topic upon a previous occasion he had obtained a good deal of evidence confirming what he then said.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, Further Consideration of the Resolution stood adjourned until this Evening's Sitting.

----- EVENING SITTING. -----

SUPPLY [18TH MAY] REPORT.

Order read for Further Consideration of Resolution:—

“That a sum, not exceeding £1,905,200, be granted to His Majesty to defray the Expense of Works, Buildings, and Repairs at Home and Abroad, including the cost of Superintendence, Purchase of Sites, Grants in Aid, and other Charges connected therewith, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906.”—

Resolution further considered.

MR. WHITLEY, continuing his remarks, said when the House adjourned he was referring to an expenditure of £25,000 for the house of the Commander-in-Chief at Chatham. He had asked the Civil Lord

to allow the House to see the plans and designs for this very expensive building. Since the matter had been discussed in Committee his opinion had been confirmed that unless an addition was made to the present consideration for service it would be absolutely impossible for that officer to live on his pay. That was one of the reasons why he brought this matter forward. It was, he supposed, too late to hope for a modification of the scheme, but he submitted that it was a wrong principle to bring in a large expenditure of this kind on an initial Vote of £5,000. With regard to the cold-meat store at Gibraltar he hoped the remarkable discrepancy between the two Departments concerned which was discovered in Committee had now been rectified. The store, he understood, was large enough to store, in case of a siege, sufficient for three years. He did not know whether it was to be packed full and kept full in anticipation of such a siege which, in his opinion, was impossible whilst we had the command of the sea. He would also like some explanation of the loan of £50,000 to New South Wales. It was not satisfactory that a Colonial Government should build a storehouse for us and that we should advance the money necessary for that purpose in the form of a loan. He had not seen any item of this kind before in the Estimates, but such items as this and others which came on this Vote showed that there was not that care and control which there ought to be over these spending Departments. He begged to move to reduce the Vote by £10,000.

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out ‘£1,905,200,’ and insert ‘£1,895,200,’—(Mr. Whitley,)—instead thereof.”

Question proposed “That ‘£1,905,200’ stand part of the said Resolution.”

MR. PURVIS (Peterborough) desired to say a few words of protest against the way in which the Estimates were criticised by hon. Gentlemen opposite, who appeared to look upon the vaguest assertions as proof. “I am told this” and “I can imagine that” was a good type of the criticisms brought from time to time against the Estimates. The hon. Member, having dealt in a casual manner with

what the Admiralty were doing at Whale Island, dashed off into the lax control exercised by the Treasury but gave no details as to where that laxity occurred. Then having scolded the Treasury he scolded the House and said they ought to be students of reform in these matters. He then went away to the other side of the globe and denounced Wei-hai-Wei as a bathing station, which was still a mere assertion. Then, to show how swift was thought, before they could forget Wei-hai-Wei he was back at Chatham with some vague description of the residence there being a palace. He had noted these points because it had occurred to him that when hon. Gentlemen criticised Estimates in this way they might feed the House with more definite and nutritive food than these vague assertions. The answer was plain. It was impossible to kick at nothing, or at least it was very jerky work, and all they could say to such vague assertions was that expenditure was not condemned by saying it was increasing. It was not what was spent but what was bought. If it could be shown that the money was thrown away and not expended on anything useful then that question might be brought before the House. As a matter of fact he had noticed that there had in fact been a decrease in the expenditure for works this year of £110,574.

With regard to the grant to New South Wales, it was a great thing when we were trying to bind the Empire together to find that New South Wales was willing to pay for a storehouse for the victualling service for the Navy for the whole of Australia. They had not the money to build it, and we lent it to them and they were to repay it in five years. Such a thing showed a mutual desire to maintain the integrity of the Empire. That was the short answer to that. When there was nothing definite to bring against the expenditure of the Departments they should not be criticised. British naval stations existed in all parts of the world, and under the higher policy of Imperial defence some were to be used and some abandoned, and in these matters the hands of the Admiralty should not be tied. The discussions in this House

ought not to touch the fringe of these questions, and they ought not to stigmatise as mere bluff that on which our existence might depend.

* THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham) in replying to the criticisms, said that the erection of the sub-lieutenants' quarters at Whale Island was a case of extreme urgency, for it was necessary to provide accommodation not later than September 1st this year. Had the Government waited until the Vote was taken it would have been impossible to have got the accommodation ready in time. There were many precedents for the course that had been followed, and it was not necessary for him to justify it further to the House. The case of Wei-hai-Wei had been adequately dealt with on previous occasions. It was not a question as to whether we were going to remain in possession of that station after the conclusion of the present war, because Wei-hai-Wei would probably always remain the chief sanatorium for the China Station, though it was given up as a coaling station. He would be glad to show hon. Members the plan of the residence of the Commander-in-Chief at Chatham, and from it hon. Members would see that the accommodation was not in excess of the requirements of the admiral and his staff. The Navy needed a victualling store in Australia, and the New South Wales Government had offered to provide it. The offer had been accepted, and as the store was wanted at once the Colonial Government asked for a loan to pay for its erection, the money to be repaid by annual instalments. That was a very proper arrangement, and the only alternative would have been for the Government to have constructed the store themselves. It was highly desirable, as a matter of policy, that we should accept the assistance of our Colonies when they offered it to us. With regard to the observations of the hon. Member as to the laxity in the scrutiny of the expenditure, and the hope expressed by him that in the reorganisation of the Departments that laxity would disappear, that was a matter which had nothing to do with Vote 10, and therefore required no answer.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) considered his hon. friend the Member for Halifax had been fully justified in the reduction he had moved, even though it only resulted in eliciting the very interesting statement of the hon. Member opposite. The Civil Lord had passed over in a few words the question of the storehouse at Gibraltar, but that was probably due to the presence of the Financial Secretary to the War Office, who would probably be able to explain why this enormous amount of money had been wasted. At present there had been no explanation with regard to it. Here was a large amount of money devoted to a particular purpose which was discovered, after the money had been spent, to be absolutely useless. Who was responsible for the extraordinary report upon which the work was proceeded with? It raised a much larger question than the mere local question at Gibraltar, because if these enormous sums were going to be spent in this way, they should know by whom they were incurred, and not be referred by one Department to another. This meat store was built, they understood, first for an ammunition store, but was found to be unsafe, and then turned into this so-called cold-meat store. That showed that the person who advised this expenditure was not to be trusted. The House was entitled to know who induced the War Office to incur this useless expenditure, because the amount of money originally expended could not have been necessary for the purposes of erecting a place to store cold meat. If notice was not taken of these mistakes of the Government they would think themselves justified in spending colossal sums of money, and, then justify the expenditure afterwards by saying it was useful for another purpose. This was not the time to expend money in this way, and he thought the Opposition were entitled to know who incurred the preliminary expenditure in this matter, and whether any action had been taken against the persons implicated in this affair. What had the Financial Secretary to the War Office to say? He, after all, was the guardian in this matter. He received the reports from the Admiralty or the War Office. What was the hon. Gentleman going to do, because whoever passed that expenditure was guilty of a dereliction of duty, or they

would have had a proper inquiry into the whole matter before the money was spent.

With regard to Wei-hai-Wei, the Civil Lord admitted that although we were bound by treaty to withdraw from Wei-hai-Wei—

MR. ARTHUR LEE: I did not say so.

MR. DALZIEL said it did not matter whether the hon. Gentleman said so or not; it was a fact that could not be disputed or denied. We were bound by treaty to withdraw from Wei-hai-Wei. But the hon. Gentleman made the most curious explanation that, although we must withdraw, Wei-hai-Wei would always be useful as a sanatorium. That was a most extraordinary statement. He remembered perfectly well the flourish of trumpets with which the Government took over Wei-hai-Wei, when the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean pointed out that it was only mere bluff, and that it would have to be vacated in a few years. It was a diplomatic asset which was of no use, and now we had the satisfaction of knowing that it was going to be one of the most delightful sanatoria throughout the whole country—a sort of huge “hydro.” That was what the House was told after the enormous amounts of money the House had been asked to sanction with regard to it.

New South Wales was, so it was said, going to assist us by building a storehouse for the victualling service of the Navy in Australia; we were to lend them the money and were to have something to say in respect of the spending of it. That was certainly a curious way of dealing as between ourselves and the Colonies, and he would have been much better pleased had New South Wales given a specific and substantial contribution to our naval expenditure. If that assurance was not worth any more than the Transvaal assurance it was not worth very much. He hoped the New South Wales assurance would be worth something more, although personally he did not see why they should not make a money contribution. The Civil Lord had stated in his explanation that money had been spent in this way by a preceding

Liberal Government. He did not see that it was entirely applicable to refer to what a Liberal Government had done on a former occasion. Whether a Liberal or Conservative Government did it, they were both to blame. Except under extraordinary circumstances the credit of this House should not be pledged without its authority. There was absolutely no limit to what might be done if once they accepted the principle that the Treasury might act without the authority of Parliament. In this case why did not the Admiralty wait until the expenditure was authorised by the House? He thought they were entitled to hear from some representative of the Government what was to be done in this matter, in view of the criticism passed the other day on both sides of the House.

MR. BENN (Devonport) called attention to the statement in Lord Selborne's Memorandum of February 14th that new construction could be as cheaply built in private yards while repairs were more economically conducted in the Royal dockyards, and asked whether this meant that the dockyards were henceforth to be starved as centres of shipbuilding for the Royal Navy and to become mere repairing shops. Would this alteration in policy really mean any alteration in the management of the dockyards, so far as shipbuilding was concerned? He was perfectly sure the hon. Gentleman would be able to give some information which would relieve the anxiety of his constituents, and make the meaning of the Memorandum more clear to those immediately concerned.

AN HON. MEMBER, on a point of order, asked whether the hon. Gentleman's Question did not come properly under the Vote for Construction.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: So far as I can make out, the speech of the hon. Member is really not relevant to this Vote. This Vote deals entirely with works.

MR. BENN said if shipbuilding was to be abandoned the works would not be required. He submitted that the two things were so intimately associated that he was nearly in order, if not quite.

Mr. Dalziel.

MR. DALZIEL said his hon. friend had finished his remarks. He thought that they were relevant to the Vote now before the House.

MR. GODDARD (Ipswich) said he should like some more information in regard to the cold-meat store at Gibraltar. He gathered from what was stated in the course of the last debate, that the cost was to be borne half by the Navy and half by the Army. He fancied that did not take into account the amount expended on the building which was first of all intended for an ammunition store. The original Estimate was £42,000, but when it was found that the building was too damp for an ammunition store it was converted into a cold-meat store. He wished to know whether the £42,000 was expended entirely out of the Navy account and whether, if that was really so, the proportion to be paid by the Navy was not very much larger than that of the Army. There was a considerable amount of questioning when the matter came before the Public Accounts Committee, and it was stated that £47,000 was then the Estimate for converting the building into a cold-meat store. There was a sentence in which it was stated that the Navy would have to pay £66,000, and the Army £23,500. It was very clear, therefore, that it was not an equal division between the two services. It was stated that in future the Navy would build their own works at Gibraltar, Malta, Hong-Kong, and Bermuda. He did not know whether that policy was being carried out at the present time, but it was very desirable that there should be no dual control in these matters. In cases where there was dual control the figures were complicated, and it was difficult to bring home responsibility to anyone.

The system by which the Treasury could sanction new expenditure without the authority of the House was a dangerous one, because the Departments were able to initiate works which had never been submitted to or considered by Parliament. When work had been begun in that way it was always said that they could not go back upon it. That was a practice which lent itself to extravagance on all sides, and it took away from the complete control

which Parliament ought to have over the finances of the country. There ought to be the greatest grounds of urgency before this was done, but such grounds could not always be stated in cases where the policy was pursued.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) said he would like a little more information as to the policy the Admiralty were going to adopt at Wei-hai-Wei. Some years ago it was said that it was to become a great naval base, and in order to carry out that policy the Government spent a large amount of money in erecting fortifications there, and they were all ready except that the guns had not been provided. How much money had been spent on the fortifications, and what was being done in regard to the Chinese regiments which were being drilled at Wei-hai-Wei under British officers? Had these troops been disbanded or were they still there? What was the nature of the dredging that was taking place in the harbour? Surely there was some mistake about the dredging of the harbour. The "Terrible," which was one of the largest vessels in our Navy, lay a long time in that harbour, which could accommodate the whole of the British Fleet in deep water. He could not understand the policy of the Government in making Wei-hai-Wei a sanatorium for the Fleet in Chinese waters. Now that Port Arthur had fallen it was obvious what would happen in the East. The true explanation of the change of opinion with regard to the value of Wei-hai-Wei on the part of the naval and military authorities was the belief that should Russia ever be compelled to part with Port Arthur Europeans would be turned out of China altogether.

As to the New South Wales loan he wished to know why the colony did not borrow the money itself with, if necessary, the guarantee of this country. The money would be advanced by us for the purpose of providing the storage, and we would never see it again. The colony was not going to pay interest for the money, and, that being so, why should we advance it? Had we a guarantee from the Federal Government or from that of New South Wales? This money was being taken out of the taxes of the

country, and there was probably no intention of its being repaid.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty what had been the results of the experiments carried out by a Committee in regard to the erosion of guns from the use of cordite.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge: The result has been the introduction of the M. D. cordite, which is less erosive than the cordite previously in use. But this does not mean that the life of the new gun is longer than that of the old. The increase in velocity increases the erosion even more rapidly than it has been diminished by improvements in the propellant; but it is this improvement which has rendered the higher ballistics possible.

MR. BENN, on a point of order, respectfully submitted that if the Secretary to the Admiralty looked at Vote 10 he would see an item having to do with machine shops and shops in building yards.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said the point which the hon. Member had raised was out of order on this Vote. It referred to Vote 8.

*MR. PRETYMAN said the points raised by the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark had been dealt with in the previous debate. The dredging at Wei-hai-Wei was undertaken for the simple reason that the available anchorage space, although spacious to a superficial observer, for first-class cruisers or battle-ships was limited. The object was to deepen the water in the roadstead so that five or six large ships might lie there. In regard to New South Wales, a totally unfair misconstruction had been put on the action of the colony. Hitherto we had been providing our own storage at the expense of Imperial funds. We were erecting these new stores out of Imperial funds as before, but the colony, in addition to the subvention which they had already agreed to pay, also agreed to repay by five annual instalments the whole cost of construction. We were

only finding the money in the first instance.

Mr. GODDARD asked if the hon. Gentleman would answer the question whether the original £42,000 for the cold-meat store at Gibraltar came entirely out of the Navy funds.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said that the £42,000 never was expended for such a purpose. The hon. Gentleman had for some time been on the Public Accounts Committee, and the matter to which he referred occurred a good number of years ago. The hon. Gentleman referred to this question of cold storage on Party lines; it was a question of administration. Did the hon. Gentleman really think that, because it was found that this site was not a suitable one for an ammunition store for the Admiralty, the Government of the day was totally incapable?

Mr. DALZIEL said that what he suggested was that the person who was

appointed to advise the Government was incapable; and he wanted to know who he was.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT said that what the hon. Member had suggested was that the Government who took the advice was incapable of administration, and he raised this as a Party issue. The Government which was responsible for the selection of the site for an ammunition store at Gibraltar which proved to be too damp was the Liberal Government which was in power in 1893. The person responsible was presumably the First Lord of the Admiralty or the Civil Lord of the Admiralty of the day. Of course, whatever sum was expended on the ammunition store was not included in the cost, which the Admiralty now submitted. The figures quoted were perfectly accurate, and the total additional expenditure for cold storage was £48,700.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 144; Noes, 86. (Division List No. 196.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manc'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V.C.W. (Derbyshire
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J.A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Corbett, T.L. (Down, N.)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalkeith, Earl of

Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R.B. (Inv'n'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J.E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir EW. (B'ry S. Edm'nds
Grenfell, William Henry
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.)

Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (Denbigh
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir J. (Monm'th
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks NR)
Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdonald, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W.)
Majendie, James A. H.
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Milvain, Thomas

Mr. *Pretyman*.

Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow
Morpeth, Viscount
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Palmer, Sir Walter (Salisbury)
Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretymann, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert

Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Reid, James (Greenock)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ridley, S. Forde
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.

Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
Whiteley, H (Ashton und Lyne)
Williams, Colonel R (Dorset)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
Alexander Acland-Hood and
Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bell, Richard
Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, N.E. (York, NR, Whitby)
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Edwards, Frank
Ellice, Capt EC (S. Andrew's Bgh's)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher

Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Higham, John Sharp
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.)
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan, W.)
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lewis, John Herbert
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Murphy, John
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
Norman, Henry
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Malley, William
Partington, Oswald
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)

Richards, Thomas
Rickett, J. Compton
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Slack, John Bamford
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R. (Northants)
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
White, George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whiteley, G. (York, W.R.)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters (NDorset)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Woodhouse, Sir JT (Huddersf'd)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr.
Dalziel and Mr. J. H. Whitley.

Resolution agreed to.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed.
“That towards making good the Supply

granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending the 31st day of March, 1906, the sum of £16,636,200 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.”—(Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.)

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said they were entitled to some explanation as to why it was considered necessary to take Committee of Ways and Means at the present time. The Government was so disorganised

that they thought they could pass matters of this kind without taking any trouble to explain the reasons for it. This Resolution would lay the foundation for a second Consolidated Fund Bill, and, if that were so, would it be the last Consolidated Fund Bill in the course of the present session, or was it preliminary to a third Consolidated Fund Bill? He was glad to see the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his place, although he was sure they had a most excellent substitute in the Secretary to the Treasury, notwithstanding the statement made by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the other day. He repeated why was it necessary to bring forward this Motion at the present time and would it be necessary to have a No. 3 Consolidated Fund Bill later in the session? He thought it was to be deprecated that such a Resolution should be submitted to the Committee without a single word of explanation.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said he should have been glad to leave this matter in the hands of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury who would have given the Committee all the explanation they desired, and who was quite as competent as he was to place the Committee in possession of that information. But from a message he had received a minute ago he understood that the hon. Gentleman desired his presence.

MR. DALZIEL: No, I did not say so.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had only stated that from a message he had received he understood the hon. Gentleman required his presence, and that this Question could be only satisfactorily answered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was sorry that the misunderstanding had arisen, because otherwise he might have continued his occupation elsewhere. The hon. Gentleman thought that these continual Motions for a second Consolidated Fund Bill were to be deprecated. He confessed he received that declaration with a good deal of surprise, because ever since he had had to do with the Treasury, either as Financial Secretary or as Chancellor

of the Exchequer, the complaint of the Opposition had been that the Government got through the session with a single Consolidated Fund Bill at the end of March, and the Appropriation Bill at the end of the session. Now that they proposed to introduce an intermediate Consolidated Fund Bill, the complaint was that there was more than one. No one who knew what the present Opposition was like would be surprised that they criticised the action of the Government whatever it was, although in so doing they contradicted themselves. In the present session, owing to the course of Supply before the end of the financial year, the Government were unable to obtain a sufficient amount of money for the various services to carry them through the session, and therefore they were obliged to come for a Consolidated Fund Bill to enable the money since voted by the House to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund. He hoped he had made it clear to the hon. Gentleman why it was necessary to have this Consolidated Fund Bill.

The hon. Gentleman asked whether there would be another Consolidated Fund Bill during the present session. Technically there would not be a third Bill during the present session, as the Appropriation Bill would serve the purpose. In a certain sense the Appropriation Bill was a Consolidated Fund Bill, because it authorised the issue of money out of the Consolidated Fund in exactly the same way as a Consolidated Fund Bill did; but the Appropriation Bill authorised the issue of money for the particular purposes for which Parliament had voted the money. It was absolutely in accordance with precedent to have one Consolidated Fund Bill at the close of March, and an Appropriation Bill at the close of the session. It was necessary in the special circumstances of this year to have an intermediate Consolidated Fund Bill to authorise the issue of further sums out of the Exchequer. He was only surprised that when, owing almost to what he might call an accident, the wish of the Opposition for such an intermediate Bill was at length gratified, it should be made a subject of complaint against the Government.

Mr. Dalziel.

MR. DALZIEL expressed his surprise that, upon a simple request for information as to why the Motion was necessary at the present time, the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have considered it his duty to make an absolutely unprovoked attack on the Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman evidently thought it was his business not only to lecture his own supporters but the Opposition as well. He thought the present Opposition had been more indulgent towards the Government than any other Opposition. Only the other day they allowed the Third Reading of the Agricultural Rates Bill to pass through without a single word. Upon no occasion had they unduly prolonged criticism, but if their efforts in this direction were going to call forth such speeches as they had just heard from the Chancellor of the Exchequer they would have to reconsider their position, and see if they could not take a more intelligent interest in some of the measures brought before the House. He did not believe any responsible spokesman of the Opposition could be quoted as demanding three Consolidated Fund Bills during the session. The

Motion now made was only necessary owing to the bungling of the Government at an earlier period of the session. If the Government had utilised the time of the House properly this Motion would not have been necessary. He wished to remind the right hon. Gentleman that when he accused the Opposition of devoting their time to contradicting one another that kind of speech was not likely to facilitate getting through the business of his Department. As for sending for the Chancellor of the Exchequer they had done no such thing, because they would never think of sending for the right hon. Gentleman in order to expedite business. He did not know whether the Secretary to the Treasury had anything more to add to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but as a protest against the speech of the right hon. Gentleman he should press this matter to a Division.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 147 ;
Noes, 92. (Division List No. 197.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Waltham)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bingham, Lord
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc.)
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Cross Alexander (Glasgow)

Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir J. C.
Douglass, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manch'r.)
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inverness B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S. Edm'nds)
Grenfell, William Henry
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'd'nderry)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hay, Hn. Claude George
Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley)
Heaton, John Henniker

Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W)
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield Brightside)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham)
Hunt, Rowland
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir J. Monmouth
Lawson, John G. (Yorks, N.R.)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants. Fareham)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. Chas. W. Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Maconochie, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Chas. (Liverpool)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Ever, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W.)
Majendie, James A. H.
Marks, Harry Hananel
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Melville, Beresford Valentine

Milvain, Thomas
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott(Hants)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
 Morpeth, Viscount
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George

Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Renwick, George
 Ridley, S. Forde
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Roysds, Clement Molyneux
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
 Spear, John Ward
 Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.)

Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stroyon, John
 Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Turnour, Viscount
 Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Whiteley, H. (AshtonundLyne)
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES — Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
 Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Atherley-Jones, L.
 Barran, Rowland Hirst
 Bell, Richard
 Benn, John Williams
 Black, Alexander William
 Boland, John
 Brigg, John
 Bright, Allan Heywood
 Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
 Burns, John
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, N.E. (York NR Whitby)
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Cremer, William Randal
 Delany, William
 Duncan, J. Hastings
 Edwards, Frank
 Ellice, Capt. EC (S. Andrew's Bghs)
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
 Eve, Harry Trelawney
 Fenwick, Charles
 Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Goddard, Daniel Ford

Grant, Corrie
 Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
 Higham, John Sharp
 Hobhouse, C.E.H. (Bristol, E.)
 Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kennedy, Vincent P. (Cavan W.)
 Lamont, Norman
 Langley, Batty
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Lyell, Charles Henry
 Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 Markham, Arthur Basil
 Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
 Murphy, John
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
 Norman, Henry
 Norton Capt. Cecil William
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Malley, William
 O'Mara, James
 Partington, Oswald
 Perks, Robert William
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
 Richards, Thomas

Rickett, J. Compton
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Roe, Sir Thomas
 Runciman, Walter
 Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
 Shackleton, David James
 Shaw, Chas. Edw. (Stafford)
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
 Slack, John Bamford
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soares, Ernest J.
 Spencer, Rt. Hon. C.R. (Northants)
 Sullivan, Donal
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
 Toulmin, George
 Villiers, Ernest Amherst
 Wallace, Robert
 White, George (Norfolk)
 White, Luke (York, E.R.)
 Whiteley, George (York, W. R.)
 Whitley, J.H. (Halifax)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Wills, Arthur Walters (N. Dorset)
 Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. (Huddersf'd)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr.
 Dalziel and Mr. Mooney.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow ;
 Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION BILL

[LORDS].

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
 THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-

DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's) im-
 moving the Second Reading of this Bill,
 reminded the House that the Act of
 1897 gave, for the first time, the workman
 who was injured by an accident compen-
 sation, whether the accident was caused
 by the default of the employer or not,
 and was confined to those engaged in
 particular trades. That was an entirely
 new proposal, and the Act was, therefore,
 to a great extent experimental. That

being so, he did not think that the framers of the Act need be disappointed that in so short a time it had been thought necessary to amend and extend it. The working of seven years had shown that considerable amendment was required, and that the Act could be safely extended to other trades. In November, 1903, he appointed a Committee to consider in what way the Act could best be amended. That Committee contained representatives of both employers and workmen. It was most ably presided over by Sir K. Digby, who was Under-Secretary at the Home Office during the first six years of the working of the Act, and had therefore had great experience in it. The able and influential representative of workmen was Mr. Barnes. The inquiry proved more difficult and more protracted than was anticipated, but though the Committee sat longer than he could have wished, because he had hoped to introduce this Bill last year, the result of their labours had been a most able and valuable Report, which was to a very large degree unanimous. On that Report the Bill was drafted. It did not change the main principle of the Act of 1897, which was that of the personal liability of the individual employer.

The main financial provisions of the Act of 1897 remained unaltered. These were as follows:—In the first place, in case of death leaving dependants the provision made was for three years wages or £150, subject to a limit of £300. Secondly, in case of death leaving persons partially dependent, a sum to be agreed upon within the same limits. Thirdly, for disablement, a weekly payment during incapacity of not more than half wages, subject to the limit of £1. The Committee drew his attention to the fact that the burden of cost to the employer resulting from the Act had steadily increased, and had not yet, in fact, reached its maximum, because it had not yet reached the point at which the number of persons in receipt of weekly payments became constant—being diminished by deaths as much as it was increased by fresh cases. The Committee, therefore, were strongly of opinion that the main financial provisions of the Act of 1897

ought not to be altered in favour of the workmen, and that the present distribution as between employers and workmen of the loss caused by industrial accidents ought to be substantially maintained. The provision that during the first two weeks of incapacity compensation should not be paid had not been altered. The Committee considered that this provision must be maintained both to prevent malingering and to avoid an enormous increase of claims for trivial injuries. He was further informed that if this alteration were made the insurance companies would greatly increase their rates. These companies and the mutual indemnity societies would increase the rates 25, 30, and even 40 per cent. if the 14 days limit were reduced, and 40, 50, or even 60 per cent. if it were altogether abolished.

The Committee also decided against the general extension of the Act to all employments, and the Government did not propose to extend it to all employments indiscriminately; but they did propose to extend it to a number of kindred trades—for instances, carriers not already included in the Act of 1897, workers in workshops where five persons or more were employed, persons employed in the care and management of horses and locomotives, including farriers, persons employed on buildings less than thirty feet in height, and on which no machinery or scaffolding was being used, persons employed on tramways, private railways, or private sidings of railways; persons engaged in roadmending, well-sinking, or in quarries less than twenty feet deep; and workmen engaged on their employer's business elsewhere than in their employer's works. [He thought some method should be adopted of extending compensation to seamen, but it ought not to come into a Bill of this character. The Committee, after carefully considering this question, recommended that it should be dealt with by an extension of the Merchant Shipping Act. With regard to fishermen, the Committee recommended special inquiry. He thought such inquiry should be held, probably by his own Department, in consultation perhaps with the Board of Trade. Some special method of treatment was, in the opinion of the

Committee, desirable for dealing with this trade, which was certainly a dangerous trade. So much for the classes of employees to which they proposed in this Bill to extend the Act.

The Bill also contained a number of Amendments by which the procedure of the original Act would be simplified, and by which litigation would be diminished; and by some of the alterations which had been suggested in the Bill, both employers and workmen would be relieved of anomalies and hardships which they suffered from under the existing Act. It was intended to make much more use of medical referees, and it was hoped to diminish litigation by making it possible with the leave of the Registrar of the County Court to have recourse to the medical referee before any litigation took place. The Bill also intended to permit employers under certain conditions to make special terms with old, infirm, or disabled men for compensation at a reduced rate in case of accident. It was difficult at all times in certain trades for old men to find employment, and the evidence before the Committee showed that one result of the Compensation Act of 1897 had been to make that difficulty much greater. With the possibility of having to pay heavy compensation in case of an accident occurring, and considering that these men were more liable to accidents than younger men and that insurance companies would not take the risk, employers preferred to engage younger men. It was felt that this point ought to be met, and therefore the Bill proposed to allow old and partially incapable men to agree with employers as to maximum claims. In this way it was hoped all parties, including insurance companies, would agree in meeting a growing difficulty.

Then County Court Judges would be permitted to award higher compensation for permanent injuries suffered by persons under twenty-one years of age, and to fix a maximum limit to the lump sum obtainable by a permanently disabled workman in cases where the employer exercised his right to obtain compulsory commutation of the weekly payments. Upon compensation in a lump sum the Court would be permitted to impose certain restrictions.

Mr. Akers-Douglas,

It might well be that payment of a sum of money did more harm than good to the recipient. A Question was put to him in the earlier part of the day, and he was able to refer the hon. Member who asked it to the clause in the Bill which exactly met the point raised. When payment was made as compensation to a relative in case of accident causing the death of a workman the Court would have power to invest the money or deal with it in such a way as it thought best for the benefit of the persons entitled thereto. There had been instances in which a widow, receiving what for her was a large sum, had lost all the benefit of it in a few weeks. It was surely better that the County Court or other authority should have the right to usefully apply or invest the money.

He had promised to make his opening remarks as brief as possible, for he knew that several hon. Members specially interested in the subject desired to speak, and, therefore, he would not dwell further on details. On the face of it the Bill was difficult to follow, but he had done his best, by the issue of a White Paper, to make the matters intelligible to those who had not been engaged in the drafting of the Bill. The object had been to make the working of the Act of 1897 simpler, less expensive, and more certain to do away with litigation as far as possible, and to secure fair compensation to those engaged in dangerous trades without putting an undue burden on the great industries of the country. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire), in moving, "That, in the opinion of this House, no Bill to amend the Compensation for Accident (Workmen) Act, 1897, can be considered satisfactory which does not contain provisions for compensation for injury to health," welcomed the Bill and congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on having introduced a measure of this character. The right hon. Gentleman was well advised in saying that the two weeks was a point

on which considerable attention would be concentrated during the debate on the measure. Labour Members, too, would probably have something to say with regard to the proposal to alter the period within which a workman had to bring his action against his employer from six to three months. These, however, were really Committee points. The most interesting portion of the right hon. Gentleman's speech was that relating to the proposed extensions of the Act. He was glad that the Act was to be extended to the whole of the building trade and that the ridiculous anomaly of the thirty feet was to be done away with. He also welcomed the extension of the Act to the loading and unloading of ships, to the carrying trade, and to workshop-laundries. But he could not understand why workshops in which less than five people were employed and laundries in which only two people were employed should be exempt. The dangers in these cases were not less than in others, and he failed to see on what grounds a man who worked with four colleagues should be compensated in case of accident, while the man who worked with only three should be entitled to no compensation. The proposal would introduce most confusing elements, and there was really no principle in limiting the application of the Act to workshops which employed a certain number of people. Nor was there any just principle in excluding those great institutions which carried on laundry work for gain.

As the Government were now of opinion that the Act might safely be extended to other trades, he hoped they would accept his proposal to extend it to cases of injury to health. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had recently stated that he was always in favour of extending the Act, but was prevented from so doing only by the action of the Opposition, and that he would not be content until it was extended to every trade in the country. That, apparently, was not the view of the Government. But if the right hon. Gentleman was really so keen about the extension of the Act why did he vote against Amendments moved in Committee in 1897, which would have had the effect of including shipping, workshops,

agriculture, and health? But inasmuch as the Government now proposed certain extensions, he hoped he could claim the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary as a convert to his view. In any case, however, he had the support of a not less influential member of the Government, for the Lord Chancellor, in delivering judgment recently in the House of Lords in the case of "*Brintons (Ltd.) v. Turvey*" said—

"It does not appear to me that by calling the consequences of an accidental injury a disease, one alters the nature or the consequential results of the injury that has been inflicted."

That was certainly true; the consequential result was not altered simply because it happened to be a disease. Wherein lay the difference between the suffering of a woman whose eye was knocked out by a flying shuttle and the suffering of a woman working in the pottery trade whose eyesight had been taken away by lead poisoning? Or again, why should compensation be paid to the dependents of a man who was killed by molten metal, and not to the dependents of a man who, driven mad by carbon disulphide, jumped out of a window and was killed? Or where was the difference between a man killed by an electric shock and a woman in a brush factory who pricked her face with a piece of deadly horse-hair, was stricken by anthrax, and died in a few hours? The industrial disease was just as surely caused by the employment in the one case as was the accident in the other. The question really resolved itself into: When is an accident not an accident? Compensation was payable for accidents. In the case of "*Brintons v. Turvey*" a man was killed by anthrax, and the employers took the matter to the House of Lords, where judgment was given in April of this year. The Lord Chancellor then said—

"I so far agree with my noble friend that I think, in popular phraseology from which we are to seek our guidance, it excludes, and was intended to exclude, idiopathic disease, but when some affection of our physical frame is in any way injured by an accident, we must be on our guard that we are not misled by medical phrases to alter the proper application of the phrase 'accident causing injury,' because the injury inflicted by accident sets up a condition of things which medical men describe as disease. . . . A workman in the course of his

employment spills some corrosive acid on his hands; the injury caused thereby sets up erysipelas—a definite disease; some trifling injury by a needle sets up tetanus. Are these not within the Act, because the immediate injury is not perceptible until it shows itself in some morbid change in the structure of the human body, and which when shown we call a disease? I cannot think so. I am, therefore, of opinion that the County Court Judge was quite right."

Lead poisoning was a disease, but it could not be said exactly when the poisoning entered the system, and in the cases of "*Marshall v. East Holywell Coal Co.*" and "*Steel v. Cammell, Laird & Co.*" the Master of the Rolls had laid it down that an accident must be something of which the date could be fixed. But in some of these cases, such, for instance, as when a woman pricked her face with horse-hair and was stricken with anthrax, the date could be fixed, but compensation could not always be obtained. Thus very subtle distinctions were set up. He asked the House to clear those distinctions away, and say that, where a person was injured by disease definitely arising out of and in course of employment, that person should receive compensation. Where was the difference between a man whose hand was crushed by a lathe and the man who was equally incapacitated by wrist-drop in the potteries, or between a man paralysed by a fall and a man paralysed by lead poisoning? To read some of the *dicta* of learned Judges one would imagine that no further legislation was required to bring cases of industrial disease within the law, but the truth was as stated by Lord Lindley—

"I hope that the decision in this case will not be regarded as involving the doctrine that all diseases caught by a workman in the course of his employment are to be regarded as accidents within the meaning of the Workmen's Compensation Act. That is very far from being my view of the Act,"

and it was no doubt very far from being the view of many others. In ninety-nine cases out of 100 injuries by disease were not taken into Court at all, and consequently no decisions were given upon them.

What were the objections to the proposals he was submitting to the House? It would probably be said that this was a small Bill, that it would be

Mr. Tennant,

dangerous to over load it, and that there was no machinery by which the proposals could be incorporated in the measure. But why was it a small Bill? There had been eight years in which to test the working of the original Act—

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have not said it is a small Bill.

*MR. TENNANT hoped he might gather from the remark of the right hon. Gentleman that he would not be told that his proposals would overload the Bill, and that some of them would be welcomed and adopted. Would it be said that there was no machinery for carrying them out? Such an objection was always poor, but it was poorer than usual in this case. Machinery could easily be found—for instance by insurance. Before the Committee to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded, Mr. Lane, the manager of the Accident Department of the Commercial Union Assurance Company, when asked whether in employments of this kind it would, from the point of view of insurance, be a difficult matter or a matter involving any very great expense to bring them within the scope of the Act, said—

"No, I do not think it would."

No doubt there were difficulties in the way. It was not a very simple thing to do. But it was the business of people interested in constructive legislation to try to surmount difficulties, and it was the duty of statesmen and Parliament to overcome obstacles. Witnesses who were not in favour of these proposals and who saw the difficulties involved agreed that in the event of such an extension, there must be medical examination of the persons employed. That would be the first thing employers would insist upon. The medical inspection of young persons in many industries had been most effective. Dr. Legge, who was really a witness against the bringing of injury to health within the scope of the Compensation Act, stated that the reduction of necrosis in lucifer-match factories was undoubtedly the result of more rigid inspection and of the dental examination. The incorporation of these proposals

within the scope of the Bill would tend to prevent many of the industrial diseases which at present existed. On that point Dr. Legge, the Home Office Medical Inspector, said—

"If a case like that got compensation it would induce the occupier to alter his method of manufacture and give up the sand-papering of this white lead, which is the cause of so much lead-poisoning. He would do it in another way—he would probably do it wet."

Q. "Would he, if insured? A. I think that the insurance companies would make him."

On the question of mercurial poisoning Dr. Legge stated—

"It is very difficult to see how the exposure to the fumes can be lessened in the small workshops in which it is carried on."

But was human life to be sacrificed simply for the convenience of manufacturers, that they might go on making thermometers in small workshops? On the question of anthrax Dr. Legge said—

"The effect of bringing this under the Workmen's Compensation Act would probably be to diminish the number of cases (about 215 within the last five years, with fifty-five deaths), more than any other measure, but it opens up very wide questions."

Yes, it did, but it was the duty of Parliament to deal with very wide questions. Dr. Legge further stated—

"Most of the anthrax cases come from Persian wool, and I think that the inclusion of anthrax under the Workmen's Compensation Act will lead manufacturers to give up using those dangerous kinds."

He (the hon. Member) submitted that he had proved that the terrors of industrial disease were as great as the terrors of industrial accident, and that the difficulties in the way of machinery could be overcome fairly easily. There was a precedent in the medical examination of young persons at the present moment. The effect of this industrial disease on the State could not be otherwise than bad. In regard to lead poisoning Dr. Legge stated before the Committee that—

"Such cases as occurred in printing works are usually bad cases . . . it is generally paralysis, and general break-up of the system."

With regard to mercurial poisoning, he stated that hardly any of the workers in thermometer-making escaped its injuri-

ous effect, while a particular worker to whom he referred appeared—

"To be attacked regularly twice a year, and alternates his time between the Holborn Infirmary and his little workshop."

Could it be said that that was a right and proper condition of things? Then in the case of Ganister miners, *post mortem* examinations invariably revealed large quantities of fine dust in the lungs, which had caused phthisis, the rate of death from which among the working population in those mines was ten times greater than among the general population at corresponding ages. Another industrial disease arose from arseniuretted hydrogen, in reference to which Dr. Legge made the following declaration—

"You might have five persons suddenly killed without any knowledge that the gas was present at all. There was one fatal case of poisoning by this cause which I inquired into, which very nearly came to a case under the Workmen's Compensation Act."

Although he had been obliged to compress his remarks he maintained that he had done something towards proving his case. He would end by quoting a sentence from the Report of the Physical Deterioration Committee—

"Complacent optimism and administrative indifference must be attacked and overcome, and a large-hearted sentiment of public interest take the place of timorous counsels and sectional prejudice."

He did not wish to impute sectional prejudice to the Government, but he feared that timorous counsels still prevailed in high places. He had brought forward this Amendment in the belief that the House was animated with a large-hearted sentiment of public interest, with a desire to diminish the hardships of those engaged in industry, with a desire to do tardy justice to a large number of the industrial population of this country. He further hoped that the House was conscious of its imperial responsibilities. It was in that hope and that belief that he ventured to move the Amendment standing in his name.

SIR J. STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow, College), in seconding the Amendment, said that he did not associate himself altogether with the general criticisms

of the hon. Member on the Bill, which he hoped to see soon passed into law. He hoped, however, that his hon. friend would accept the addition which he had suggested in his own Amendment to extend the operation of the measure to "dangerous trades."

*MR. TENNANT said he would be willing to do this if the hon. Member would accept the addition of notifiable industrial diseases.

SIR J. STIRLING-MAXWELL said that being anxious to see this Bill passed he would not make a lengthy speech. He entirely associated himself with what the hon. Member opposite had said as to the impossibility of really drawing a distinction between cases of illness and accident, and he thought such an alteration should be made. As a matter of fact this was one of the legitimate extensions of the Act which was contemplated when the House passed the original Act. He hoped his right hon. friend would give favourable consideration to this matter.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, no Bill to amend the Compensation for Accident (Workmen) Act, 1897, can be considered satisfactory which does not contain provisions for compensation for injury to health in dangerous trades.'"—(*Mr. Tennant.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) agreed with the object of the Amendment, and trusted that the Government would agree to accept it, for in his opinion the experiment which had been made under the Workmen's Compensation Act more than justified the bringing of it forward now. Even with the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire the Bill would not be so good as some of them would like to see it. Indeed, every argument for amending the Bill was a belated justification for the amendment of the original Bill seven years ago. The Home

Sir J. Stirling Maxwell.

Secretary had stated that this Bill, after nearly eight years experience, was still a tentative and experimental measure, and that considerable amendment of the original Bill was now required. When the Act was previously under consideration his hon. friends and himself ventured to move that agricultural labourers and seamen should be included, and that the anomalous and ridiculous restriction of thirty feet to buildings should be done away with, but they were then told that they were simply attempting to damage the Bill, and they had more recently been accused of attempting to wreck this measure. Everything he and other Labour Members said then was now justified. As to the defects still in the Bill, he could not see why seamen should not be included. If there was one class of men who deserved protection it was those who went down to the sea in ships. He did not wish to see sailors excluded from the benefits of this Act for another seven years. He agreed also that there were certain other occupations so dangerous that they ought to be included. The man who was a victim of the disfigurements of anthrax, for example, would still suffer unless the Amendment were accepted, and he would get no compensation. He knew a case where a man lost four fingers in a printing machine, and he was awarded £150, whilst a man who had lost both his eyes from anthrax did not get a single penny, and, consequently, he was dependent first upon his limited savings, and then upon his friends. If this Amendment were rejected, the men who suffered from anthrax would still suffer, and manufacturers would be encouraged in their slothful methods and bad processes, whereas if the Act was extended to such cases, they would be induced by the insurance companies to put their house in order. To those in favour of preferential treatment of the Colonies he wished to suggest one practical way in which they could further their policy. Foreign wool was a very fertile source of contagion in causing anthrax amongst workers amongst wool. By giving compensation to anthrax cases caused by working Persian wool they would be helping the colonial trade by encouraging the use of British wool which was not

quite so dangerous to health. That was the only bit of protection he would advocate. The great argument in favour of the Bill was that, despite the Workmen's Compensation Act, and the safeguards imposed by Parliament on industrial occupation, accidents in factories and workshops were seriously increasing. In 1897, 513 workmen were killed and 35,000 injured. In 1904 the number killed had increased to 721 and the number injured to 78,000. These figures indicated a laxity on the part of the Home Office in putting the existing law into force. Whatever the reason for this was it ought to be put a stop to as soon as possible, and the time had arrived when some such drastic Amendment as that now before the House should be adopted. In 1897 there were eighty-eight men killed in docks, whilst in 1904 there were 138 killed. That appeared to him to indicate not a vigorous administration of the present law, but, on the contrary, laxity and inertia. Accidents in docks during the present administration had increased from 2,859 to 5,342. During the past seven or eight years the total number of injuries in factories and workshops had increased from 63,856 in 1897, to 115,564 or nearly double in eight years. That did not indicate vigilant administration. The one bright spot was the diminution in cases of lead poisoning. In 1900 there were 1,058 cases, which fell to 597 cases in 1904. He attributed the falling off to the yearly criticism of the Home Office in the House of Commons in Committee of Supply.

He saw no reason why a man who was injured should wait fourteen days before he got compensation, or indeed, why there should be any limit at all.

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He believed the artificial limit encouraged malingering. They all welcomed the extension in the Bill to other trades, but they sincerely regretted that seamen were not included, and wished that dangerous trades should be dealt with in this measure. When the Bill reached Committee the Labour Members would endeavour by friendly Amendments to make it a good Bill. He wished to repudiate the suggestion that by putting forward friendly Amendments they were either killing, obstructing, or mutilating this Bill. They were ready to do all they could to assist in passing remedial and ameliorative legislation. They contended that the seven years experience which they had had of the present Act was quite enough to warrant all the Amendments which they had suggested being adopted. The fact that there were 5,000 men, women, and children killed every year in their factories, mines, and workshops, and that 100,000 were more or less seriously injured, warranted them in asking that this legislation should be made as humane and protective as possible. All the suggestions they made were in that direction. They made these suggestions, and the Home Secretary might rely upon it that when this Bill came into Committee they would do their very best, notwithstanding taunts from whatever quarter, to make this a better measure, and the Labour Members would use all their efforts in that direction.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Samuel Roberts*,)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed on Tuesday, June 20th.

2 E

WAYS AND MEANS.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Welling-ton), in moving the adjournment of the House, said it was proposed to take, at midnight to-morrow, the Report of the Resolution in Ways and Means passed by the Committee that evening.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That this House do now adjourn."

MINISTERS AND THE MOTOR-CAR ACT.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barn-staple), said he had to ask a question of serious importance. Was it a fact that two of His Majesty's Ministers had that day appeared in the police Court and been fined? The matter was, of course, of the very gravest importance. Those Ministers were the Attorney-General and the Secretary to the Board of Education. Also, in respect of what offence were these fines inflicted? The Attorney-General was supposed to be the embodiment of law and order in this country, and if he himself was allowed to break the law, then things had come to a very serious pass indeed. The Secretary to the Board of Education had the management of the children of this country, and it would be a serious matter if every schoolmaster throughout the country knew that the Secretary for Education was guilty of breaking the law.

*SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD said he appeared on behalf of his hon. friend the Member for Oxford University, whom he did not see present. He had made care-

ful examination into this case, and he understood that his hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General would answer and prove his own innocence. He was merely a passenger in a motor-car. The person who, he was sorry to say, was responsible for the excessive speed of the motor-car and was fined, and who, in fact, emulated the example of Jehu the son of Nimshi, was his hon. friend the Member for Oxford University. When he returned to the House after, he hoped, a not very long absence, he would be able, no doubt, to explain the circumstances in which this unfortunate occurrence took place.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs), who was received with laughter and cheers, said he was happy to say that the Attorney-General had not been prosecuted, and had not been fined for any offence whatever.

Question put, and agreed to.

EAST INDIA LOANS (RAILWAYS).

Committee to consider of authorising the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise money in the United Kingdom on the security of the Revenues of India for the construction, extension, and equipment of Railways in India by State Agency or through the Agency of Companies (King's Recommendation signified), this day.—(*Mr. Secretary Brod-rick.*)

Adjourned at ten minutes after
 Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 6th June, 1905.

BARON GRAVES.

Report from the Lord Chancellor, That, in the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, the claim of Henry Cyril Percy, Baron Graves of Gravesend, in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland is of such a nature that it ought to be referred to the Committee for Privileges; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Skegness Water; Bolton Corporation; North-Eastern Railway (Steam Vessels).

Also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15).

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in respect of the petition for the following Bill:—South Barracas (Buenos Ayres) Gas and Coke Company.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Wemyss Dock Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1^a.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Liverpool Corporation Bill, ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed.

Read, and agreed to.

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South Barracas (Buenos Ayres) Gas and Coke Company—(Petition for Bill). Examiners' Certificate of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday the 27th instant.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]—(Pudsey Corporation Tramways Order). A Petition of Messrs. Dyson and Company, of 9, Great George Street, Westminster, Parliamentary agents, praying for leave to present a petition of the Yorkshire Electric Power Company, praying to be heard by counsel against the Order, although the time limited by Standing Order No. 92 for presenting such petition has expired; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and Standing Order No. 92 to be considered on Thursday next in order to its being dispensed with in respect of the said petition.

London United Tramways (Extension of Time) Bill. Reported, without Amendment.

Highland Railway Bill. Reported, with an Amendment.

Halifax Corporation Bill; Bristol Blind Asylum Bill [H.L.]; Acton Sewage Bill; Ocean Accident and Guarantee Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Oldham and Saddleworth District Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Great Northern Railway Bill. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments.

Rhondda Urban District Council Bill. Read 2^a, and committed. The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Birmingham Corporation Bill. Read 3^a, with the Amendments; further

Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Finance Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Caledonian Railway Bill; Dublin United Tramways Bill; Midland Railway Bill; North-Eastern Railway Bill; Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Newry, Keady, and Tynan Light Railway Bill; Bootle Corporation Bill; London County Council (General Powers) Bill. Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

Lautour's Divorce Bill [H.L.]; Malone's Divorce (Validation) Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Accrington Corporation Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill; Croydon Gas Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill [H.L.]. Committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). An Amendment made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). The Amendment proposed by the Select Committee made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendment to be received on Thursday next.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). Amendments made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Thursday next.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Read 3^a (according to order), and passed.

Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Donovan's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill. Read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 104.)

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF LONDON AND DISTRICT ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY BILL [H.L.]

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^a."—(*The Chairman of Committees.*)

***LORD KINNAIRD:** My Lords, I rise to ask whether the noble Earl who has just moved the Third Reading of this Bill will consent to adjourn it for a few days in order that the House may be in possession of the facts concerning its provisions. The Bill is, I believe, a reversal of the whole policy of Parliament, which decided in the past that London should be divided into districts for the purpose of the supply of electricity, that the undertakers should be under statutory obligation to supply any consumer for any purpose, and that the undertakings of companies should be purchasable by the local authorities on terms which seem rather onerous on the companies and which do not sufficiently allow for the recoupment of the money invested in those companies. The supply was necessarily at first mainly given for lighting, and it is only within about the

last three years that a demand for power has sprung up. This demand the existing undertakers have met, and they are fully alive to the need for a cheap supply of power to manufacturers. They are able to supply all the power which can be required at low rates, and if they were given the same privileges which this new company are asking, they could supply at quite as low a rate as that company could do.

The new company seeks to be relieved of all the conditions which are imposed on existing undertakings, such as the London County Council's Building Acts, restriction of area, prohibition to supply outside that area or of combination, and, in the case of companies, liability to purchase, and to compete under these very favourable conditions with existing companies who are under all these disabilities. If any relaxation in the conditions hitherto imposed by Parliament is to be made surely it should be granted to existing undertakings rather than to a new company; the more so as many millions of money have been invested in these undertakings on the conditions laid down by Parliament and in the belief that those conditions would not be altered to their detriment. To relax them in favour of a new company, and to authorise it to compete with existing undertakings which are still bound by the old conditions, is not treatment which investors might fairly expect from Parliament. The term of some of these companies is a short one, and your Lordships can readily understand that to raise money for a few years with uncertainty as to what may happen at the end of the period is a serious matter for shareholders and those who administer these companies. Under these circumstances, and as this is an entirely new proposal, I venture to ask your Lordships to allow the Bill to be adjourned for the further consideration of its provisions, and not leave it to the other House to protect the interests involved.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW); My Lords, I hardly know what object could be attained by the postponement of the Third Reading of this Bill. This is a

very complicated and difficult subject, and one which has been under the consideration of a Committee of your Lordships' House for a period extending over six weeks. The Committee was presided over by the noble Earl opposite, Lord Camperdown, and I do not think I shall be betraying any confidence when I say that the opinion was universally expressed, by both those who promoted the Bill and those who opposed it, that the Committee and the noble Earl himself gave the most careful and attentive consideration to the whole matter. I do not think your Lordships could with advantage reconsider the principle of this Bill without hearing the evidence and counsel in the same way that the Committee did. This Bill involves a very large sum of money, and I think it would be very unfortunate if your Lordships were to do anything which would have the effect of preventing the Bill being considered in another place in time for it either to be passed into law or to be rejected, after consideration, during the present session of Parliament. I am sure the noble Lord will concur with me when I say that the Bill is likely to receive the greatest possible attention in the other House. I myself had given an undertaking to the promoters that the Bill should be put down for Third Reading to-night in order that it might go to the other House and receive early consideration there; and I venture to think that after the patient hearing which has been given to it by a Committee of your Lordships' House, and after all the money that has been expended upon it, the least we can do is to give an opportunity for the Bill to be thoroughly thrashed out in the other House in time, if it is approved of, for it to become law this session. In the circumstances I regret that I cannot accede to the request of my noble friend.

***LORD AVEBURY:** My Lords, it appears to me that the speech which has just been made by the Lord Chairman of Committees supplied an argument in support of my noble friend Lord Kinnaird's suggestion. This is a very intricate and difficult question; the Bill has been before a Committee of this House for a long time; yet it is placed on the Paper at a

moment's notice, and we are asked to give the Bill a Third Reading without being afforded any opportunity of seeing the Bill in its present form, of reading the evidence and examining its provisions. There is strong feeling out of doors that the old companies are placed at a very great disadvantage by this Bill. My noble friend Lord Camperdown, however, who presided over the Committee of your Lordships' House which considered this Bill, has been good enough to inform me privately that in his judgment the objections made by Lord Kinnaird have been met, and I hope he will say a few words, so that the House may know exactly how the matter stands.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, I certainly did not intend to address your Lordships on this matter, but as the noble Lord behind me (Lord Avebury) has called upon me to do so, I do not mind saying a word or two with regard to the case of the existing companies. I believe Lord Kinnaird's complaint refers chiefly to the existing lighting companies which hold their powers under statute, and are liable to be purchased at the end of a term of years. I do not think it would be possible to go into the whole case here, and I am sure your Lordships would not be obliged to me if I were to give you even a short *resume* of the proceedings which, as the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees stated, occupied six weeks before the Committee, and I think we had something like thirty or forty counsel generally present. I will only say that, so far as the statutory companies are concerned, their case is met by a special clause in the Bill; and if my noble friend who raised the question to-day and the noble Lord behind me will discuss the matter with me privately, I shall be very glad to go into the question with them in detail. I hardly think your Lordships would be interested if I were to do so at the present time. But this I can say, that so far as the companies are concerned the Committee paid very special regard to their case; so much so that they called the attention of the promoters to the fact that they had not failed to observe that, without

some protection, there would be considerable hardship done to the companies whose undertakings were purchasable under statute, and a clause was devised and put forward which the Committee thought sufficiently met that hardship. I observe that when noble Lords oppose private Bills which have been before Committees of your Lordships' House, they do not, generally speaking, go to the Chairman or to any of the members of the Committee; they go to some of the opponents who have had their case heard and been defeated, and they take as gospel all that those opponents say to them. If we were to attempt to meet a case so stated it would necessitate a very long speech; but I hope your Lordships will consider that I have said sufficient to show that, in regard to this Bill, the interests of the statutory companies were very carefully considered.

LORD KINNAIRD: My Lords, it was my intention to move the rejection of this Bill, but I did not think that course would be respectful to the strong Committee which considered the Bill. I may inform the noble Earl that the companies are not quite satisfied with the clause which the Committee seem to think protects them. After what has been said, however, I will not take up your Lordships' time further. I have no doubt that in another place the interests of the companies will be looked after and an Amendment inserted which will adequately protect them.

On Question, Bill read 3^a, and passed; and sent to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Message from the Commons for leave for the Clerk of the Parliaments to attend to be examined as a witness before the Select Committee of that House. Leave given accordingly, and a Message ordered to be sent to the Commons to acquaint them therewith.

FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

Twenty-third Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1904. Part II. Salmon Fisheries.

INDIA (ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES, 1905-1906).

Explanatory Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India.

IRON ORE DEPOSITS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

Reports on iron ore deposits in foreign countries, compiled at the Board of Trade from information collected by His Majesty's diplomatic and Consular officers.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

Forty-eighth Annual Report of the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery, 1904-1905.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACTS, 1860-1904.

Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland appointing police cells at Inveraray, in the county of Argyll, to be a legal prison for the detention of prisoners for a period not exceeding three days before, or during, or after trial.

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.

Treasury Minute, dated 30th May, 1905, directing that the Trust Fund Accounts of the Public Trustee under the Irish Land Act, 1903, shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE IRELAND (No. 1) BILL [H.L.]; CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment; and to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments. The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and

Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 102.)

BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT, 1882, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

FINANCE BILL.

Read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 103.)

ADVERTISEMENT REGULATION BILL. [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with a further Amendment. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House, and by the Standing Committee, to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 101.)

IMPORTATION AND SALE OF LIQUOR IN WEST AFRICA.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY rose to call attention to the subject of the importation and sale of intoxicating liquor in West Africa, especially in Lagos and Nigeria; and to ask for information. He said: My Lords, I thought it my duty a few weeks ago to call attention in your Lordships' House to what seemed to me, and I think to all of your Lordships, to be an instance of quite exceptional and gross misrule and wrong-doing in Western Australia. I ask your Lordships to-night to give attention to a subject quite dissimilar in character, but, I think, more grave because our own responsibility is more directly involved. It relates not to Australia, but to the West coast of Africa.

The region to which I wish to call your Lordships' attention is a large one. The circumstances and conditions of its various parts are, of course, not identical; but I desire to concentrate attention upon one portion only of that great region—the colony of Lagos and the protectorate of Southern Nigeria, with, in the background, the protectorate of Northern Nigeria. I dare say your Lordships all remember what is the geographical lie, so to speak, of the region—that along the coastline there is the

colony of Lagos and the protectorate of Southern Nigeria, and that behind there is a *hinterland* quite separated from the sea—the immense territory of Northern Nigeria, which is at present under somewhat different rules from either the colony of Lagos or the protectorate of Southern Nigeria. In Lagos and Southern Nigeria there is practically no restriction at this moment on the sale of liquor; there are regulations of a kind, but, as regards retail selling, there is almost absolute freedom; so much so that in some places liquor has become, strange to say, a sort of current coin of the country—it has become to some extent the actual coinage of the district. It is in Lagos and Southern Nigeria alone that the mischief that I desire to speak of at present exists in its entirety, but it is impending in Northern Nigeria, where at present the sale of liquor is absolutely prohibited, for as the railway approaches the frontier of Northern Nigeria the danger becomes great that by smuggling and in other ways liquor may be introduced into that region as well.

From the first it has been recognised, in regard to those regions, that one of the great perils which would attend larger commercial intercourse with Europe would be the introduction of liquor in a manner that would be deleterious to the health of the individual natives and to the prosperity, therefore, of their community as a whole. I do not, however, propose to take your Lordships back into the history of long ago. I will ask you merely to go back six years. In the year 1899 a deputation from the "Native Races and the Liquor Traffic United Committee" was introduced to Mr. Chamberlain; and no more sympathetic supporter of the cause advocated by the opponents of the liquor traffic among natives is to be found than Mr. Chamberlain. The answers he gave were in every sense encouraging, and as the starting point of the modern problem I desire to quote the words which Mr. Chamberlain used. Mr. Chamberlain was then speaking as Colonial Secretary, and I assume that His Majesty's Government will not repudiate responsibility for what he said. Mr. Chamberlain used these words—

"I think I need not say that I am well aware of the importance and the representa-

tive character of the deputation and that you are probably well aware of my entire sympathy with your objects; in fact, I was at first inclined to doubt whether it was really worth your while to come here in order to push an open door, and to preach to one who is already converted. I do not think I am a fanatic, and no one, I hope, has called me a sentimentalist, and I am certainly not a teetotaler. I hope I am not extreme with regard to any subject; but I hold, as a matter of deep conviction, that the liquor traffic, and above all, the increase of the liquor traffic in West Africa amongst the native races, is not only discreditable to the British name, not only derogatory to that true Imperialism—the sentiment which I desire to inculcate in all my countrymen—but it is also disastrous to British trade."

Mr. Chamberlain went on to speak of the question of the duty that is imposed. He said—

"We have been asked to say what should be the maximum and what should be the minimum of duty, and we have unhesitatingly declared that in our opinion 4s. is the minimum which ought to be charged. As regards the maximum we have no maximum, because there is no maximum that can be proposed which we will not joyfully accept. I can only hope that other nations may be willing to take a similar view, in which case a very marked change would, we believe, take place in this traffic. . . . I agree with those who think that a special responsibility falls upon Great Britain, and, although I admit there is a great difficulty in the way of foreign competition in dealing with this subject, still I do not think that that difficulty is altogether insurmountable."

That was Mr. Chamberlain's view, but he was only giving expression to an opinion which had already been most carefully formulated and expressed by a yet greater man—by Lord Salisbury himself some ten years before. Lord Salisbury, in reply to a similar deputation, which waited upon him on December 14th. 1888, said—

"Undoubtedly you are not wrong in assuming that the sympathies of Her Majesty's Government are entirely with the objects of this deputation. It is a case that stands by itself. I need not inform you that I am not a temperance enthusiast myself. I do not coincide with many of the views which I hear urged with great confidence in this country. But the controversy here and the controversy with respect to the native races have nothing in common. The native races are for all practical purposes children, and, so far as we can do it, like children they must be protected. No one who even looks at history, still less at contemporary history, can doubt the extreme character of the evil which this unrestricted traffic causes. It has before this swept whole races away; it is now producing the gravest havoc in all parts of the world. We are so deeply convinced of that, that any efforts on our part would never be wanting, nor would

our attention for a moment relax, for the purpose of inducing that common effort by which alone this miserable traffic can be restrained."

"So much, my Lords, for English statesmen; and I desire to rest my plea to-night upon the fact that those representative English statesmen did practically commit this country to a promise that we should protect these, as Lord Salisbury called them, children, these native races, from an evil which had been found so absolutely degrading.

I would turn for a moment from the words of British statesmen at home to the words of those who in that country are the experts specially conversant with the problem that, as administrators, they have to deal with. Some of your Lordships may be familiar with an article on this subject contributed to *The Nineteenth Century* in April, 1897, by one of the greatest authorities on all that concerns West Africa—Sir Frederick Lugard; and that article from beginning to end is one sustained and carefully-reasoned argument in favour of the strongest possible restraint being placed on the sale of liquor among the natives of West Africa. Sir Frederick Lugard is now Governor of Northern Nigeria, and has maintained absolute prohibition in that territory. Sir George Goldie and Sir Frederick Cardew, Governors each of them in turn of districts in Western Africa, have spoken as follows. Sir George Goldie said—

"I speak from sixteen years experience . . . and I say confidently that unless immediate steps are taken to stop this traffic—not by higher duties, but by absolute prohibition—

I am not asking for that, but am quoting his words—

"a state of things will soon be brought about that must ultimately lead to the entire abandonment of the country. . . . I cannot believe that the conscience of Europe will long allow that the vast populous regions of tropical Africa should be used only as a cesspool of European alcohol."

Those are strong words, but they came from one who knew what he was talking about and who spoke from the fulness of knowledge. Sir Frederick Cardew said, in a speech at the Royal Colonial Institute, that—

"As to the liquor traffic I can fully endorse all that the lecturer has said, so far as my knowledge goes. . . . I feel convinced that if you would take away from the natives the liquor,

other wants would be created, and they would purchase other articles which would be far more remunerative to the British merchant."

Those are merely specimens, which could be multiplied almost indefinitely, of the opinions of those who have studied this subject as to the extent of the evil and the need of firm and decided action on the part of the British Government which is responsible for these portions of West Africa. To turn to a much lower level of capacity for understanding the problem, I would remind your Lordships that the Alake of Abeokuta, who recently visited this country, has appealed again and again to His Majesty's Government to protect him and his people from what he believes to be the curse which is harming them on every side.

These are the bare facts, which I honestly think are indisputable, and I do not suppose for a moment that His Majesty's Government will deny what these authorities have said. On the other hand it is urged by those who are adverse to further restrictions that natives will certainly continue to drink intoxicants of their own manufacture irrespective of the drink that is imported. The answer to that is to be found in comparing any native village or tract of country in which natives confine themselves to home-made spirit with a tract of country in which European spirit has been introduced. There is no comparison between the results of the one and the other. Then it has been said by some of those who, with the best possible intentions to be honest, are necessarily biased by the fact that they have to be responsible for raising revenue in the country, which is a matter of extreme difficulty, that the percentage of drunkenness in Lagos and Southern Nigeria is less than in the slums of London. Of course, that is true, my Lords. If you take the whole population of Lagos and Southern Nigeria you are dealing with more than 2,000,000 of people, the greater part of whom have no possible means of getting access to this drink, and if for the purpose of percentage you distribute over that immense population the drink which is consumed by those to whom the opportunity has come the percentage to the population will, of course, be exceedingly small.

I am not asking for total prohibition, such as was asked for by Sir Frederick Cardew and others; total prohibition of the importation of liquor for the natives would be, I believe, an excellent thing, but, as I have said, I am not asking for that. I have no doubt it is practically impossible at this time of day to bring that about; but what I think we have a right to ask is that there shall be a genuinely high duty imposed so as to make it very difficult to import on a great scale for native consumption the deleterious stuff that is at this moment ladled out to them. It is, I think, indisputable that even the efforts which I do not for a moment deny the Government have made to raise the duty have not been to anything like the extent that they might have been. Mr. Chamberlain spoke of 4s. as the minimum which he desired to see, but after all the raisings that have taken place we have only reached 3s. 6d., and your Lordships well know that 3s. 6d., or 4s. even, is about one-third of the duty charged on most spirits in England. The Government can hardly be regarded as having done everything possible in the matter while that remains the rate of duty levied.

These are, I think, the facts; but anyone who is unfamiliar with the subject may ask, How is the Government responsible? What can we practically do? The Government, of course, is omnipotent in those regions. It can do anything it pleases. I am not asking that it should do all it could, but that it should do more than it is doing at present. The Government have a double responsibility. In the first place, because they derive a revenue from the duties imposed on the liquor, and, in the second place, because it is by means of the Government railroad that to a great extent the liquor is being brought into regions where it was unknown before. The railway is Government property; the income of the railway, though I know it is not a remunerative concern at present, goes to the Government, and the outgoings on the railway are defrayed by the Government. This country has always held that there is no more civilising agency for the help of Africa than the introduction of railway communication, and that it is in the fullest sense of the word a civilising

agency; but if that railway is to be largely, or mainly, as it is, used for the bringing of liquor into regions where that kind of stuff has been unknown before, then I entirely decline to regard the railway as a civilising agency or something that is in the long run likely to do good.

At this moment the railway goes 120 miles up country from the coast. Its construction has already been sanctioned to a place a good deal further; its name is, I think, Oshobo, and when it reaches there, it will be within easy touch of the frontier of Northern Nigeria, where prohibition is absolute, and into which it is at present difficult to smuggle liquor owing to the great distance of the territory from the coast and the lack of railway accommodation. But once the railway is brought up to the frontier there will be practically no difficulty in introducing this accursed stuff, which is sold as legitimate liquor, into Northern Nigeria, which is at present saved from its demoralisation. No returns are published of the traffic on the railway which would enable us to judge how much of that traffic is in liquor; but I have been told by one observer and another, by the man going about on business as well as by the chance traveller, that the main use of the railway appears to be the bringing up from the coast of enormous quantities of this liquor. The scale which it has attained is such that I am told that one at least of the mercantile firms concerned in it has built on Government land great sheds for the mere purpose of containing the cases of liquor which have been brought into the country for native consumption, and which are distributed by the firms that import it to the natives in the interior by means of the facilities which we afford them. Of course, there are fairly high freights charged for the carriage of the liquor over the railway, but the cost is far less than the cost of portage by native bearers for such long distances. The railway is, therefore, practically the sole means by which into the distant interior it is possible to convey the liquor on a great scale. In an Answer given in the House of Commons a fortnight ago the Colonial Secretary said that the rail-borne traffic bears an infinitesimal ratio to the total

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

imports. I do not deny that. The total imports cover all the liquor which is distributed along the coastline. I am speaking simply of the liquor that is carried into the interior. It is a small part, perhaps, of the whole; but the railroad is the only way by which the liquor can be profitably taken into the uncontaminated regions, and that being so the directors of the railway, and the Government at home and in the colony, are responsible for the traffic.

Now, what is the liquor that is being thus imported? It is not English made; it is almost entirely German made; and for those who are dealing with questions between the two countries that question may very profitably be considered. I do not think myself that the point is of much consequence, but it is a fact that what we are facilitating is not the consumption of liquor made in England but liquor made from potatoes and other substances in Germany. This stuff, which is sold as gin or rum at a few pence a bottle, is of so poisonous a nature that no European would think for a moment of drinking it; and a friend of mine was informed by a doctor the other day that he was recently called to see a European, who, his own supply of liquor being exhausted, had for the first time taken some of the spirits sold to the natives, with the result that in three days he suffered from a most intense form of inflammation.

* THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): Where was that?

* THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: In Lagos or Southern Nigeria, I am not absolutely sure which. This testimony as to the character of the liquor will not, I imagine, be disputed. The quantity, again, is enormous. Statistics from the Gold Coast show that, whereas in 1889 506,000 gallons of this liquor were brought in, at a cost of £45,000, the quantity imported in 1903 was 1,238,000 gallons, the value of which was estimated at £133,000. The figures for Lagos are not quite so bad. The Colonial Secretary stated in the House of Commons recently that the importation of liquor to Lagos in the last two years had considerably fallen off. I do

not know from what Returns the right hon. Gentleman was quoting, but according to the Government Returns there has, so far as I can see, been an increase, for in 1901 the quantity brought in was 948,000 gallons in 1902, 1,260,000 gallons; and in 1903, 1,084,000 gallons. Then, again, there is a matter which I do not wish to bring to the notice of the House in detail, but I am sure the noble Duke who represents the Colonial Office in your Lordships' House will know what I allude to when I say that facts have come to light in the last two years as to the illicit importation of liquor, which must be regarded as modifying any congratulation which may be felt respecting the quantities shown in the Government returns.

What is the object with which we are constructing the railway there? It is, I presume, to increase legitimate trade. The proportion of liquor to other commodities carried on the railway is enormous, and the result is that the trade which we should desire to encourage is being cut out by the liquor trade. A trader stated the other day to a gentleman who repeated the conversation to me that for every £5 worth of cloth which he now sold, he sold £50 worth of liquor. That is the way in which the liquor trade is cutting out the rest; and, although I do not dwell on the point, there are some of your Lordships who may care to be reminded that it is foreign-made liquor that we are importing at that rate. But this case rests, it seems to me, upon far bigger grounds. The unanimous testimony of every competent and unbiassed observer is that this liquor traffic has the most demoralising and degrading effect upon the natives. The whole character of the people is being lowered. I have received the following testimony within the last twenty-four hours from the man who perhaps knows better than anybody else what is going on there—

"Wherever I go, on the railway, on the Niger River steamers, in the towns on the coast, and in the interior, I see unmistakable signs of the degrading demoralising character of this traffic."

I could multiply evidence of that kind if it were necessary.

Before I close I want to contrast what is happening in West Africa with what is

happening in South Africa. None of your Lordships who are familiar with South Africa will doubt for a moment the legitimacy and the desirability of the stern laws which have been passed to put down or to prevent the drink traffic among the natives of South Africa. I do not know whether your Lordships remember how stern those laws are. Under those laws anyone who sells, barters, or otherwise supplies any coloured person with any of the beverages mentioned in the Ordinance is, for a first offence, liable to imprisonment with or without hard labour, for a period of not less than six months and not more than twelve months, and at the discretion of the Court to a fine not exceeding £250. In default of payment of the fine, imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for a further period of six months may be inflicted. For a second offence the penalties, in all respects, are doubled. For a third or any subsequent offence, the period of imprisonment is for not less than two years and not more than three, and a fine not exceeding £1,000, with imprisonment in default of payment of the fine, for a further period of not more than two years. Hard labour, as in the previous cases, may or may not be inflicted.

Why is it that on the west coast of Africa we allow the coloured person to get as much absolute alcohol as he likes, even with the injurious proportion of 2·68 per cent. of fusel oil, while the one in the Transvaal is liable to find himself in gaol if he procures a glass of beer or spirits; and why should the illicit retailers in the Transvaal be stigmatised by Lord Milner as “undesirables” and be liable to such extreme penalties for selling liquor, while on the west coast no restriction whatever exists, no limit is placed upon the number of licences granted, and no inquiry is made as to the character of the licensee? It seems to me that we are either doing a gross wrong to the natives of South Africa in imposing such restrictions upon them, or else we ought to impose very different restrictions from those which obtain at present on the natives of West Africa, who are equally our fellow-subjects. That does not appear to me to admit of being

disputed, and I shall be glad to hear through the noble Duke what His Majesty's Government have to say about it.

Lord Milner, in facing the problem in South Africa, spoke of it as one which must increase in difficulty as time goes on. He said—

“The real fight has got to come, and it will be a great fight. All I can say is, that the Administration is thoroughly alive to the momentous importance of the question, and that it has the public opinion of the respectable majority of the European inhabitants solid at its back. The real difficulty, of course, is that in the control of the liquor traffic the Government has to employ hundreds of agents, and the profit to be derived from making natives drunk is so enormous that every one of these agents will be exposed to bribes—and very big bribes. But while I realise the difficulties, I also feel that we are bound, by hook or by crook, to overcome them. The whole credit of this Administration is at stake in the matter, and I feel confident that His Majesty's Government will support us in the view that no effort and no expense should be spared in carrying out a policy which, if successful, will mean a momentous triumph for civilisation in this part of the world.”

I appeal to His Majesty's Government on behalf of the natives of West Africa for protective treatment of a similar kind to that given to the natives in South Africa. If we look back along English history it is a sad story we have to tell with regard to the relation of England to the natives of West Africa, and I do trust that your Lordships will agree with me in expressing the hope that His Majesty's Government will take care that in future it shall not be in another and a different sense a sad story still.

***THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH:** My Lords, I have listened attentively to the speech of the most rev. Primate. He gave your Lordships a review of the quality of the liquor sold to the natives in West Africa, he commented upon the rate of charges on the railway, and he also offered some observations on the general administration and on the sale of liquor in our West African Colonies. I will deal first of all with the question of the quality of the liquor sold. But before I do so, let me assure the most rev. Primate that the principles and regulations laid down in regard to this matter by Mr. Chamberlain, and emphasised by Lord Salisbury, have not been modified by

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

the Colonial Office. I would remind the most rev. Primate that so far back as 1889, at the Brussels Conference, the question of the quality of the liquor was raised by the representatives of this country, and the German plenipotentiary maintained, on behalf of his Government, that the spirits which were manufactured in Germany were made on a large scale, that every care and supervision was exercised by the Government to see that no injurious matter was allowed to be placed in the bottles which contained these liquids, that the latest improvements had been employed in this manufacture, that the merchants were honourable men in high positions, and that the German Government themselves had never thought it their duty in any way to challenge their integrity. These were the representations which were made to His Majesty's Government by the plenipotentiary of the German Government.

As the most rev. Primate reminded the House, Mr. Chamberlain was, in 1896, much exercised as to the question of the impurity of the spirits sold in West Africa. He consulted the chambers of commerce with a view, first of all, to limiting the traffic, and, secondly, to improving the quality of the spirits. He was anxious that the Governors of the West African Colonies should take steps to see that the liquor that came into their ports was genuine, and not in any way adulterated. The result of the discussion between the late Colonial Secretary and the chambers of commerce was that a great number of samples—I think over sixty—were sent home from the different West African Colonies for examination. They were examined by the Board of Inland Revenue, and the Report which was issued upon that examination was to this effect—

“The presence of these by-products is important as indicative of the general character and mode of the manufacture of the spirit, but their total quantity is small, and it is an open question to what extent the presence of a more than usual proportion of these by-products may injuriously affect consumers when the spirit is used in strictly limited quantity, or add to its toxic effects when drunk in excess.”

In other words, the result of the analyses of this liquor was to show that there were no injurious ingredients in it, and although

it is not claimed that it was of a very high quality, yet those who are experts in this matter were unable to point to any dangerous ingredients in it which were likely to do harm to those who drank it.

The question of the impurity of the liquor was not lost sight of, and at the Brussels Conference of 1899 the matter was again brought up by the representative of this country, and the representative of the German Government assured us that the products employed in the manufacture of this liquor were perfectly pure, that the regulations and restrictions governing its production were as stringent and severe as they could be made, and that it was practically impossible for the manufacturers to produce such injurious liquor as it had been suggested had been the case. After considerable discussion the conference decided not to insist on the inclusion of any provision in the convention dealing with the adulteration of liquor. That, in rough outline, is the story of the efforts made by this country at these various conferences to ensure that the liquor sold should be of a good and pure character.

I now turn to the specific case with regard to Lagos. Sir William MacGregor, as the most rev. Primate is aware, was Governor of Lagos up till about twelve months ago, and he addressed a message to the Legislative Council on the subject of impure alcohol, in which he said that a sample of alcohol lately sent in from a country market was, on analysis, found to contain a percentage of poisonous matter, and on the strength of this and other cases he intimated that he would ask the Legislative Council at an early date to consider a law dealing with adulterated or noxious food and drink. But he added—

“It appears that the gin, rum, brandy, and whiskey imported is free of injurious ingredients.”

Sir William MacGregor considered that some of the liquor coming in was of an injurious character, and therefore he brought in an Ordinance which was passed in the following year, Clause 4 of which prohibited the sale of articles of food containing ingredients injurious to health; and there is a sub-section of

that clause which declares that for the purpose of this section spirits containing the article commonly known as fusel oil in a certain proportion shall be deemed to be an article of food injurious to health.

I understood the most rev. Primate to say that the liquor in Lagos is bad, and he told your Lordships of a European who drank some of it, and experienced most injurious results. I do not know, of course, whether the results were due to the liquor or to the fact that the individual in question was unaccustomed to very strong drink. But unless the most rev. Primate can show your Lordships that the stringent law which was passed by the late Governor of Lagos, and which is now in operation there, is either being evaded or that its enforcement is being negligently or improperly carried out, I do not think he can with reason say that the liquor which now goes into the colony is either impure or of an injurious character. So far as I am aware, there is no Ordinance in Southern Nigeria corresponding to that which was passed in Lagos; but if there are grounds for supposing that the quality of the spirits entering that territory is bad or harmful, we are perfectly willing to suggest to the authorities there that they should consider the advisability of bringing in an Ordinance similar in character to that which Sir William MacGregor passed in Lagos.

I must, however, remind the most rev. Primate that in Southern Nigeria it is more difficult to exercise supervision over the liquor coming into that territory than it is in Lagos. The town of Lagos itself is practically the sole entrance into the colony, and on the spot there is a laboratory where the analyses and examination can take place, and so it is comparatively simple and easy to exercise supervision there. But in Southern Nigeria the Government would have to create more complicated machinery to secure the same successful results as those which we believe have been achieved in Lagos. I understood the most rev. Primate to say that in his opinion the colony was suffering seriously from the unrestricted importation of

liquor; indeed, his statement was that the colony was—

“Degraded with drink.”

I do not think I can do better than quote the words of Sir William MacGregor upon the condition of Lagos. As the most rev. Primate is aware, Sir William MacGregor took the deepest interest in the welfare of the natives. He was ever solicitous for their well-being, and, a strong teetotaler himself, he might be considered as a Governor who would be exceptionally interested. In a report which he sent home in 1901 Sir William MacGregor said—

“I had occasion to point out to the Legislative Council, in my message accompanying the Estimates of revenue and expenditure, that the consumption of spirits had diminished by about one-third in the last two years; that the spirit imported here is not adulterated; that I have seen no evidence whatever that the natives in this territory are, as a whole, in any way visibly affected by the spirits consumed by them. Since I made these statements I have visited and closely observed several provinces of the interior, and these visits confirm and strengthen what I stated to the Council.”

and after a lengthy report he went on to say—

“I cannot pass by without remark the very strong expressions used in the letter of July by the Wesleyan Methodist Conference. I have looked here in vain for ‘the ravages of the liquor traffic’ I have visited and lived in many countries, but I have seen none in which the power of the vice of drunkenness is so conspicuous by its absence as here. I would ask these people to visit Lagos and then have a look at Glasgow and London.”

I am sure the most rev. Primate will give full weight to the views of Sir William Macgregor. Sir William had had long experience in the colony and knew what he was writing about; and I think we may take his views—we at the Colonial Office certainly do—as complete refutation of the exaggerated statements made.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I would remind the noble Duke that those whom I quoted were Colonel, now Sir, Frederick Cardew, for several years Governor of Sierra Leone, and Sir George Goldie, founder and Governor of the Royal Niger Company. I assure the noble Duke that I was quoting from the best official information at my command, and not mere hearsay of a vague and unimportant kind.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I quite appreciate the point of view of the most rev. Primate, but I cannot help feeling that Sir George Goldie, when he made the observations which the most rev. Primate has quoted, was associating that statement, not with the inhabitants of His Majesty's dominions, but probably of territories outside.

Now let me turn to the question of railway rates, which exercised the mind of the most rev. Primate. The railway rates in Lagos are neither prohibitive in their character, nor are they so arranged as to encourage the transit of liquor along the line. They are based more or less upon what it would cost to carry the liquor by road over the same distance.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I can only say I am greatly surprised at that statement and that I think there is some mistake.

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: I have in my hand a statement on the subject by Sir William Macgregor, who observes that the cost of the carriage of spirits from Lagos 120 miles up country is by rail 47s. a ton, and by canoe and carriers 40s. 4½d. If the railway rates were raised, as the most rev. Primate seems to desire, the only effect would be—and I think this is lost sight of—that the liquor would be carried by the road, and the railway would lose both the freight on the liquor and the freight on the native products given in exchange for the liquor, which would be brought back by the natives. In the case of the Gold Coast the rate for the transport of spirits was fixed at 50 per cent. above that for first-class goods—that is 3s. 9d. per ton per mile—in order not to offer facilities to this trade. But what has been the result? An extremely small amount of liquor has been carried on the railway. It has been carried by native porters. The railway has not only lost the freight on the liquor, but also the freight on the native products given in exchange for the liquor—and the natives have obtained the drink all the same. Although the railway rates may not be as high as the most rev. Primate would

wish, yet the rail-borne traffic in spirits undoubtedly shows a decrease, and it is infinitesimal compared with the amount of liquor imported. The most rev. Primate said he had been informed that in Lagos there was a gigantic traffic in liquor going on and that large sheds had been built specially to receive the liquor. I confess that that was a statement which I was amazed to hear, and it is one which we will certainly inquire into; but until it is verified I feel sure the most rev. Primate will allow me to accept it with a considerable amount of reserve.

I will now give your Lordships the figures in regard to the importation of liquor into Lagos during the last few years. The most rev. Primate reminded the House that the Colonial Secretary had stated in another place that the amount of liquor imported into the colony during the last few years had diminished, and the most rev. Primate proceeded to quote figures which showed the reverse, but I venture to think he did not go far enough back. He only went back to the year 1900.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: Mr. Lyttelton's words were "for the last two years."

*THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: During the last ten years, since 1895, there has been a marked reduction. In 1895 there were 1,750,000 gallons imported; in the years 1900 and 1901 the amount imported each year was 1,000,000 gallons; in 1902 1,250,000 gallons, and in 1903 about 1,000,000 gallons. The most rev. Primate must remember that the population of Lagos is increasing, and the diminution in the amount of liquor imported, combined with an increase in the population, is a satisfactory point which must not be lost sight of. To-day there are about 3,000,000 inhabitants in the territory of Lagos, and if you divide that number by the number of gallons of liquor coming into the colony the average consumption amounts to one-third of a gallon per head per annum. I ask the most rev. Primate whether, in his opinion, that is an excessive amount.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: Does the noble Duke, in calculating his percentage, include the whole population, tens of thousands of whom are cut off from access to the liquor at all? I do not mean in Northern Nigeria, but in the other regions.

The Duke of Marlborough.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH: No, I was speaking only of Lagos proper. The prohibition zone referred to by the most rev. Primate represents in population and area two-thirds of our West African possessions. Outside that zone, as the most rev. Primate admits, it is impossible to enforce prohibition. The liquor traffic has grown up, and His Majesty's Government can only do their best to check and control it, but to exercise proper control international co-operation is necessary. If there were higher duties in any region than in the surrounding countries smuggling could only be prevented by an expensive preventive service. It is the experience of those who reside in West Africa that if the native finds that liquor is being sold cheaper in a neighbouring country he goes there and purchases it and smuggles it into his own country, the Government of which loses the revenue on the liquor, but does not prevent the native obtaining it.

The most rev. Primate asked how it was that there were not in West Africa stringent laws similar to those in force in South Africa. I think the answer is very obvious. In South Africa you have perfect control, you have a large dominion under British influence, and you can draw up and enforce a regular code of rules. But it would be impossible to enforce in West Africa the liquor laws that obtain in South Africa unless we were able to secure the hearty co-operation of the European Powers who are our neighbours there. The attitude of the Colonial Office has always been that we were ready to raise our duties on spirits if the other Powers would do the same. At the Brussels Conference of 1899 we did our best to get other Powers to agree to higher spirit duties, but our representations did not prevail. We also tried to induce the

conference to place a higher rate on spirits above a certain strength, to check the importation of what is known as concentrated alcohol, but again we were not able to induce the other representatives present to accept our view. The view that the minimum rate should be 4s. has long been entertained by His Majesty's Government. It must not be forgotten that even now the duties in the British possessions are higher than those in foreign possessions, and in recent years they have been considerably increased. Next year the International Conference will again meet. We shall certainly urge on that occasion as strongly as we have done before the importance of levelling up the rates, and we hope that those representations will receive more favourable consideration than they have hitherto. If we are able to induce the conference to accept our view, then I daresay the minimum rate will be as high as 4s., but, whatever the outcome of that conference may be, I can assure the most rev. Primate that His Majesty's Government are just as desirous as he is to see the drink traffic in our West African Colonies controlled, and, if possible, curtailed, and to see a proper and reasonable supervision exercised over the natives, so that they are not allowed to become the victims of the evils consequent upon the unrestricted traffic in intoxicating liquors.

LORD STANMORE: My Lords, I rise to make a practical suggestion, which may, perhaps, not be altogether unworthy of the attention of His Majesty's Government; and which, I hope, will receive the approval of the most rev. Primate, to whom the thanks of all those who wish to see an end put to the destruction of the native races by drink are due on this occasion for bringing forward the subject. My practical suggestion is this. Prohibitory laws such as those to which the most rev. Primate referred in South Africa are undoubtedly of great value, but there is considerable difficulty in enforcing them, and I believe it will be found that a far more efficacious remedy will be the passage of a law rendering the recovery of any debts incurred by natives for drink irrecoverable before

any Court. That is a system which I had the good fortune to work for about five years with the most marked success. The traders, who, after all, are, I suppose, the only persons who desire to keep up this disgraceful traffic, very soon left off supplying when they found they could not enforce payment by law. It was not the ld. worth sold by the glass which paid them; they sold considerable quantities to native retailers. An Ordinance was passed which rendered these debts irrecoverable, and the sale and drinking of spirits in the colony of Fiji decreased year by year in the most marked manner. I therefore venture to throw out this practical suggestion as one which may contribute to the diminution of this traffic, which, as I have said, none but those engaged in it wish to continue.

When I entered [the House this evening, on my return from the Continent, I was quite unaware that this subject was going to be discussed. Had I known beforehand I should like to have said more on the subject; but as it is, I shall confine myself to this one practical suggestion. I cannot refrain from expressing my regret at hearing my noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies appear to undertake a defence of the abominable stuff which we know is sold in Africa and other places as liquor. I was sorry to hear such a defence come from the Colonial Office, and to hear my friend, Sir William MacGregor, a total abstainer himself, and a man strongly desirous that all others should be abstainers, quoted as an authority for the goodness of the liquor and the little harm it did. The quotations which the noble Duke gave are no doubt perfectly correct. Sir William MacGregor is a fair and just man, and he thought it his duty to correct the exaggerated statements on the subject. But I think I can venture to say, without fear of contradiction, that Sir William MacGregor is one of those who would most hail effective restrictive measures for keeping liquor from the native races.

House adjourned at five minutes
past Six o'clock, to Thursday
next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 6th June, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have not been complied with, viz.:—Workington Harbour and Dock Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—South Barracas (Buenos Ayres) Gas and Coke Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Accrington Corporation Bill; Aylesbury Gas Bill; Croydon Gas Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Worcestershire County Council (Bridges) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Clacton Improvement Bill [Lords]; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]. 'As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Newry, Keady, and Tynan Light Railway Bill (changed from "Ulster and Connaught Light Railway Bill"). As amended, considered.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

North British Railway (General Powers) Bill. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Mansfield Corporation Bill [Lords]; Whitby Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Bootle Corporation Bill. Ordered, That, in the case of the Bootle Corporation Bill, Standing Order 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill. Ordered, That, in the case of the London County Council (General Powers) Bill, Standing Order 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

(King's Consent, and Prince of Wales' Consent, as Duke of Cornwall, signified). Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 17) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill (by Order). Read the third time, and passed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

SIR HENRY AUBREY-FLETCHER reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday, the 21st June, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill;

Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill, without Amendment.

Stockport Corporation Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to regulate and restrict the wearing of Naval and Military Medals and Decorations." [Naval and Military Medals Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to dissolve the marriage of Alice Edith Donovan, the wife of Daniel Augustine Donovan, with the said Daniel Augustine Donovan, and to enable her to marry again; and for other purposes." [Donovan's Divorce Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for incorporating and conferring powers on the Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company." [Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable the Mayor, Aldermen, and Citizens of the City and County of Newcastle-upon-Tyne to purchase by agreement the undertaking of the Scotswood Bridge Company; to provide for the composition by the several local authorities interested of the tolls now leviable by the said Bridge Company and of the toll known as the Thorough or Great Toll now leviable by the Newcastle Corporation and the extinction of those tolls respectively; to provide for an increase in the public library rate: and for other purposes." [Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [Lords].]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board to make new waterworks; and for other purposes." [Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords].]

Donovan's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; to be read a second time.

Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill

[Lords]; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Corporation Bill [Lords]; Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

CHARTERED SOCIETIES BILL.

Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Deskford, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

STREET BETTING BILL.

Petition from West Ham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SUNDAY TRADING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the United Free Church of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Twenty-third Annual Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, being for the year 1904. Part II. Salmon Fisheries [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland appointing Police Cells at Inveraray, in the county of Argyle, to be a legal prison for the detention of prisoners for a period not exceeding three days before or during or after trial, and of convicted prisoners for a period not exceeding seven days from the date of conviction [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 192.]

IRON ORE DEPOSITS.

Copy presented, of Reports on Iron Ore Deposits in foreign countries, compiled at the Board of Trade from information collected by His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

Copy presented, of Forty-eighth Annual Report of the Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery, 1904-5 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND ACT, 1903.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated May 30th, 1905, directing that the Trust Fund Accounts of the Public Trustee, under The Irish Land Act, 1903, shall be audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES, 1905-6).

Copy presented, of Explanatory Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Ordered, That the several Accounts and Papers which have been presented to the House in this session of Parliament relating to the Revenues of India be referred to the consideration of a Committee of the Whole House.—(*Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*)

Resolved, That this House will, upon Wednesday, June 21st, resolve itself into the said Committee.—(*Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*)

QUESTIONS TO MINISTERS.

Return ordered, "of the number of Questions put to Ministers and others during the Sessions 1893 to 1904, inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 101, of Session 1893)." —(*Mr. Henniker Heaton.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

The Medical Council.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, in view of the fact that under Section 7 of the Medical Act of 1886, the representation of medical practitioners on the Medical Council is confined to three representatives for England, one for Scotland, and one for

Ireland, and that during the interval of nineteen years medical practitioners have increased in number in England alone by 7,000, will he state whether the Medical Council have considered the expediency of representing to the Privy Council the desirability of increasing the number of representatives of medical practitioners on the Medical Council as provided for under Section 10, Sub-section (c), of the Medical Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I am informed that this question was considered by the General Medical Council last month, and on no less than six other occasions during the previous fifteen years, but that each time the decision of the council has been that it is inexpedient to make any representation to the Privy Council.

Shop Hours Act, 1904—Closing Orders.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state in what localities closing orders have been made under the Shop Hours Act, 1904, specifying in each case the class of shops to which the order applies and the hours of closing which have been fixed; and how many proposed orders are now under the consideration of the Home Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) Two local authorities, viz., the town councils of Barnsley and Swansea, have made closing orders and submitted them for confirmation. Both the orders apply only to barbers' and hair-dressers' shops. Their provisions cannot be finally considered and confirmed until the expiration of the month allowed for the receipt of objections. In thirteen other cases (eleven boroughs and two counties) draft orders at various stages of the procedure under the Act have been submitted for preliminary consideration, and the authorities have been or are being furnished by the Home Office with provisional observations and suggestions. These are the particulars for England and Wales only. In Scotland and Ireland the Act is not administered by my Department.

Refusal of Certificates for Weighing Machines of British Moneyweight Calculating Scale Company.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he is aware that certificates have been refused, without reason assigned, to weighing machines of the British Moneyweight Calculating Scale Company, Limited, many of which had been sold in this country before the passing of the Weights and Measures Act of 1904; and whether he will prevent inspectors from forbidding the use of such scales, when stamped and correct, until a reason has been assigned for the refusal of such certificates and there has been time to go into the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.*) Certificates were refused under Section 6 of the Weights and Measures Act, 1904, to weighing machines submitted by the company to which the hon. Member refers, and the company were informed of the grounds of refusal. The question whether machines of the same pattern which were stamped by inspectors of weights and measures before the decision of the Board of Trade can still be lawfully used is one upon which the Board are now being advised.

Stranding of the "Syren."

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether it is intended to hold an official inquiry into the stranding of the torpedo destroyer "Syren" on a rock to the east of Bere Island.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) A court-martial has already been held in the ordinary course.

Discharges from Portsmouth Dockyard.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty the number of men who have been discharged from Portsmouth Dockyard since 1st January, 1905, the number of men it is intended to discharge during the present financial year, and the number of men who are under notice or have been discharged who have qualified by length of service to claim a bonus, and the total amount payable on such claims.

(Answered by Mr. Pretyman.) The number of men discharged since 1st January, 1905, is 779, of whom 406 were discharged on reduction. The number of men it is at present intended to discharge during the financial year is 1,054. In addition it is estimated that natural wastage during the same period will result in a further reduction of 540. The number of men discharged or under notice of discharge, who are entitled to gratuities, is 201, and the total amount of these gratuities is £6,118 7s. 5d.

Inspection of Wines and Spirits in Bond.

MR. CROOKS: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, under the Customs regulations regarding wines and spirits in bond, a qualified cooper must be employed in such stores, and whether the whole of the casks must be inspected at least once a month to ensure that there shall be no waste or leakage.

(Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.) The reply to both the points raised by the hon. Member is in the negative.

Maximum Salary of Operating Telegraphists.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that a number of operating telegraphists in the Central Telegraph Office are in the possession of papers issued by the Civil Service Commissioners which held out prospects of obtaining a salary of £190 per annum; and whether, seeing that a number of these men have been kept at a salary of £160 per annum for several years, and that he has now decided to promote forty men from £160 to the higher salary, he will state the number of men left who were promised the prospect of £190 per annum, and when this prospect is likely to be realised by them.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) I have already fully dealt with this matter in my Answers to the hon. Member's Questions of the 2nd† and 7th‡ March and 5th‡ and 17th§ April, and I can only add that the prospects of the tele-

graphists are now much better than they were during the period when the notices referred to were issued.

Telegraphist Wilson, of Clones, and the Postal Telegraph Clerks' Association.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the treatment of a telegraphist named Wilson, stationed at Clones, by the local authorities because of his connection with the Postal Telegraph Clerks' Association, of which he is branch secretary; whether he is aware that the local postmaster has stated that he intends to punish Wilson for belonging to this society; and that, since a meeting held on Sunday week, the postmaster used offensive language to Wilson at the counter, in presence of the public, in connection with the work of the association; and whether, seeing that previous Postmasters-General have stated that the staff possess the right to combine, he will direct that this treatment of Wilson should cease.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) I have at present no such information as enables me to answer this Question. I will make further inquiry and communicate with the hon. Member.

Regulations for Export of Tobacco and Cigars.

MR. STANHOPE (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that, while British exporters of tobacco are permitted to export small parcels abroad direct from the factory, the Revenue authorities refuse to allow them to supply cigars for use on board during the voyage, unless goods are deposited by them in bulk in a bonded warehouse and then repacked; and whether these regulations of the Revenue authorities can be relaxed, in view of the fact that there is a public desire to receive these cigars direct from the factory, and that the general law does not appear to be binding in such circumstances.

(Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.) I have received several communications on this subject and am considering

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlii., 183, 561.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxliv., 441.

§ See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 289.

whether it is possible without fresh legislation to grant the permission desired by traders.

Indian Viceroy's General Earthquake Fund.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that the home subscriptions to the Viceroy's General Earthquake Fund have not yet reached the sum of £5,000, he will consider the advisability of issuing a special appeal to the British public for further help.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) The nature of the appeal to be made was decided on the recommendation of the Governor-General, and public attention has been repeatedly called to the fund. I fear that there would be no advantage at this stage in taking further measures. The list of subscriptions remains open, and I trust that additional contributions may be received.

Indian Army Reorganisation — Lord Kitchener's Proposals.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, before the Indian Budget comes on, he will issue to Members Papers containing the full proposals of Lord Kitchener as regards Army organisation in India, distinguishing those which have been adopted by the Government of India and those which are still under discussion, also correspondence that has passed on the subject between the Government of India and the Secretary of State.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) I am not in a position to lay upon the Table the Papers asked for by the hon. Member for East Perth. Some of the proposals made by Lord Kitchener are still in an incomplete stage, and the details are not of a character which it would be advantageous to disclose. In the discussion of the Financial Statement for 1905-6 in the Council of the Governor-General of India, the member in charge of the Military Department said with regard to this—"It will be understood that in questions affecting mobilisation the military authorities are unwilling to publish more details than is absolutely necessary,

and the members of this Council will not, I am sure, press us for information which it would be undesirable to give."

Southern Nigeria Proclamation, No. 15, of 1903.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the provisions of the Southern Nigeria Proclamation, No. 15, of 1903, empowering the High Commissioner to require chiefs to clean the rivers and creeks or to repair the roads in their districts, and imposing compulsory labour for this purpose on all able-bodied men and women, under penalty of fine or imprisonment, have been put into operation; if so, whether any remuneration has been paid to the chiefs; whether any part of such remuneration has been received by the natives employed; and whether similar requirements for compulsory labour exist in any other British colony or protectorate.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.) The proclamation referred to by the hon. Member has been put into operation. The proclamation does not impose compulsory labour, but regulates the compulsory labour existing under the tribal system. It also regulates the penalties for evading labour, substituting specific sentences for the former arbitrary punishments, which included flogging and mutilation. I understand that certain chiefs have received payments on account of work done of the character contemplated in the proclamation. The Government deals directly only with the chiefs, and I cannot say whether any part of such remuneration has been received by the natives employed. The requirement of labour for public purposes, including the clearing of rivers and repair of roads, is part of the customary tribal system throughout West Africa, and has been regulated by statute in several of the British colonies and protectorates.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Gold Coast Legislative Council and Public Works in that Colony.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is

aware that the Legislative Council of the Gold Coast Colony passed an Ordinance on 1st May, 1905, authorising a loan of £1,400,000 for railways and other works; and will he say whether all the unofficial members of the Council formally protested against the passing of the Ordinance; and, if so, for what reason; and whether the execution of the works contemplated in the Ordinance will be thrown open to tender or will be entrusted to the Crown Agents.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. LYTTETON, Warwick and Leamington): The Ordinance referred to by the hon. Member was passed on 1st May. All the unofficial members of the Legislative Council formally voted against its passing, and I understand from the Governor's despatch reporting the matter that whilst they were unanimously in favour of the proceeds of the loan being applied in carrying out the works contemplated in the Ordinance, their voting against it was intended as a protest against those works being carried out under the same system as that which had been followed in constructing the Sekondi-Kumassi Railway. I am unable to state at present whether the execution of any of the works will be thrown open to tender or undertaken by the Government. In no case is the execution of public works in the Colonies entrusted to the Crown Agents.

Report of the Brussels Sugar Convention.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the Report on the late session of the Brussels Sugar Convention, held in the beginning of April of this year, will be distributed.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The Papers are now in the hands of the printer and will, I hope, soon be ready for distribution.

Duties on German Exports.

MR. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade upon what percentage of her exports in 1904 Germany has, under the commercial treaties based on the new tariff, obtained reductions of duties from

other States; and upon what percentage of exports she has had to submit to increased duties.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The particulars desired cannot be given, in the shape asked for, in answer to a Question, but the matter is engaging the attention of the Board of Trade, and an endeavour is being made to compile such statistics on the subject as the available information permits.

MR. BRIGHT: When may we expect the information?

MR. BONAR LAW: The compilation involves a great deal of labour and I cannot promise the result at an early date, but the work is being pushed forward as rapidly as possible.

Prohibition of Imports of Spanish Sugar.

MR. LOUGH: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade, with regard to the prohibition of the importation of Spanish sugar, if he will say what weight of sugar constitutes an appreciable quantity; and whether, seeing that this prohibition took place some two years after the condemnation of Spain by the Brussels Permanent Commission without any further action on the part of that body, the Government reserves to itself the right of suddenly excluding any sugar imports from condemned quarters, including the twenty countries dealt with by the Permanent Commission in October, 1904; and, if so, whether the trade has any safeguards against such proceedings.

MR. BONAR LAW: I am not prepared to give a figure which will be universally applicable, the matter being one for consideration having regard to the circumstances of each case. It is the duty of His Majesty's Government, on the occurrence of an appreciable importation of sugar from a country reported by the Permanent Commission to grant a bounty, to take the measures prescribed by the Convention. The decisions of the Commission in October, 1904, to which reference is made, have been suspended or revoked on the appeal of His Majesty's Government.

MR. LOUGH: Does that imply that, supposing that sugar is brought in from any of these twenty countries, there is no risk of its being prohibited in the same way as the sugar imported from Spain is prohibited?

MR. BONAR LAW: It does imply that.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Do His Majesty's Government or the permanent officials in Brussels settle what weight of sugar constitutes an appreciable quantity?

MR. BONAR LAW: That is left to His Majesty's Government.

MR. LOUGH: So His Majesty's Government is solely responsible for the prohibition of Spanish sugar?

MR. BONAR LAW: It is responsible in this sense, that it has done it, and only done it in order to fulfil an undoubted obligation under the Brussels Convention.

Aliens Bill—Government Amendments.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Government Amendments to the Aliens Bill will be placed upon the Paper.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Any Amendments to the Aliens Bill which the Government may have to propose will be placed on the Paper in ample time to admit of their being considered before the Bill is taken in Committee.

Undetected Crime in England.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, in connection with the 9,920 cases of crimes against property with violence committed in England last year, only 3,691 persons were apprehended; and whether any explanation can be offered of the failure of justice in so many cases.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The figures given by the hon. Member are correct,

but it does not follow that there is a failure of justice in any of these cases. The explanation is the very simple one that most of the burglars and house-breakers apprehended have each committed several offences—some of them many offences—before their apprehension.

Threatening Letters in England.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state how many threatening letters were brought to the notice of the police in England during the past twelve months; and whether he can explain why the Criminal Statistics for England take no cognisance of this offence.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have no information of the number of threatening letters brought to the notice of the police. When they constitute a criminal offence they are entered under the appropriate head in the English Criminal Statistics, according to the nature of the offence, which depends on the nature of the threat.

MR. MACVEAGH: What is the difference between a threatening letter in England and one in Ireland? In the latter country you class them all as outrages.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not rise out of the Question.

Vagrancy Laws.

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the inadequacy of the vagrancy laws; and whether he is prepared to initiate legislation on the basis of labour colonies, such as at present obtains in Belgium.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: A Committee, of which the right hon. and learned Member for the Ripon Division is Chairman, is now inquiring into the whole subject of vagrancy. The question of legislation must await the Report of that Committee.

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE: And when may we expect the Report of the Committee?

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I cannot say, but after we get it and have considered it there will be no delay in presenting it.

Divorce Cases in the Royal Courts of Justice.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Solicitor-General whether he can state the total number of divorce suits entered for trial in the London Courts during the past year; the number of cases which went to a hearing; the number and nature of decrees granted; the number of cases in which the King's Proctor intervened; and the number of cases in which his intervention was justified by results.

THE ATTORNEY - GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): Seven hundred and seventy divorce and other matrimonial suits were set down for trial during 1904, making, with 167 pending at the commencement of the year, a total of 937 suits for hearing. Of this number 771 were tried or otherwise disposed of in Court, the petitioners being successful in 698 cases. The decrees included 636 decrees *nisi* for dissolution of marriage, twenty decrees for judicial separation, twenty-three decrees *nisi* for nullity of marriage, eighteen for restitution of conjugal rights, and one decree in a suit for jactitation of marriage. During the year ending March 31st, 1905, the King's Proctor intervened in twenty-three cases. In eighteen of these cases the decrees have been rescinded by the Court, three are awaiting trial, and in one judgment has been reserved. In the remaining case the action of the petitioner which led to the intervention was shown to have arisen from an honest mistake as to the law, the intervention was not pressed, and the Court, in the exercise of its discretion, made the decree absolute.

Llandecwyn School.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS (Merionethshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether the Board has decided anything with regard to Llandecwyn School.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): The Board have determined to hold a public inquiry with regard to the necessity of the Llandecwyn School. It was originally proposed to hold it on May 19th, but that date was inconvenient to the education authority, and it has now been arranged for Friday next, June 9th.

Llanelltyd School.

MR. OSMOND WILLIAMS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he has sent down an inspector to inquire into the condition of Llanelltyd School; and, if so, whether he has yet reported thereon.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: One of the Board's architects visited the school on Saturday last. His report has just been received.

Base Coinage in Ireland.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many cases of coining or uttering base coin were brought to the knowledge of the police in Ireland during the past twelve months; how many of these cases were in Ulster; and how many of these in Belfast.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): In 1904 there were sixty-three cases, of which seventeen occurred in Ulster, and of the latter sixteen were in Belfast.

Dreenavurrig.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board will undertake the construction of a road into the townland of Dreenavurrig from the public road leading from Sneem to Waterville, in view of the fact that the people of this townland, where upwards of twenty families reside, have to bring their cattle and sheep and cars and donkeys by boat in order to reach a public road.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Board have not received any application for

assistance in this matter. Their funds for public works have been allotted for the current year.

MR. BOLAND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this road was inspected two or three years ago?

MR. WALTER LONG: Very likely. We have an enormous number of applications, but only a very small proportion can possibly be granted.

Murder and Manslaughter Cases in Ireland.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, of the twelve cases of murder and manslaughter in Ireland between December 1st, 1904, and April 19th, 1905, five took place in Ulster; and whether he can state in how many cases capital punishment was inflicted.

MR. WALTER LONG: The twelve cases mentioned comprised eight cases of murder and four of manslaughter. Of the murders, two were in Ulster, three in Leinster, and three in Munster. Of the cases of manslaughter, three were in Ulster, and one in Connaught. Capital punishment was inflicted in one out of the eight cases of murder. It was imposed in two other cases, but the sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life.

Prosecutions for Injury to Property in Ireland.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many prosecutions took place in Ireland during the last twelve months for injury to property; and what percentage of these cases took place in Ulster.

MR. WALTER LONG: In 1904, sixty-eight persons were prosecuted for the indictable offence of malicious injury to property, and of these twenty-five or 36 per cent., were prosecuted in Ulster.

Crimes Against the Person in Ireland.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that, of the sixteen cases of indecent assault in Ireland between 1st December, 1904, and 19th April, 1905, eight took place in the province of Ulster; and whether he can state in how many of the eight cases convictions were obtained.

MR. WALTER LONG: The fact is as stated. In five out of the eight cases in Ulster convictions were had, and in the three remaining cases the accused are awaiting trial.

Forgery in Ireland.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many prosecutions took place in Ireland last year for forgery or passing forged notes; and how many of these were in Ulster.

MR. WALTER LONG: Twenty-six, of which six were in Ulster.

Firearms in Ulster.

MR. REDDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that of the six cases reported in Ireland of firing at the person between December 1st, 1904, and April 19th, 1905, three were in Ulster, he will cause more stringent steps to be taken in that province to enforce the law regarding the carrying of firearms.

MR. WALTER LONG: The police authorities take all necessary measures to enforce the law in Ulster as in other parts of Ireland.

Threatening Letters in Ireland.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many of the eighty-five threatening letters quoted in the recent Parliamentary Return of Outrages were anonymous; how many prosecutions followed; and how many convictions were obtained.

MR. WALTER LONG: All the letters were anonymous in the sense that to none was the genuine signature of the writer appended. Some were signed "Captain Moonlight," or some other assumed name. In no case was the offender made amenable.

Mr. Mayberry's Kenmare Estate.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received any application for the sale of the estate of Francis G. Mayberry, near Kenmare, county Kerry; and, if not, if they are carrying on any negotiations for the reinstatement of Mrs. Sullivan and other evicted tenants on the estate.

MR. WALTER LONG: No, Sir; and no opportunity has therefore arisen for dealing with the applications for reinstatement which have been received from four evicted tenants on the estate.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): The right hon. Gentleman says no application has been received, but I wrote it myself and sent it.

Grants to Technical and Agricultural Schemes in Kerry.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland who made the representations on which grants were made to technical and agricultural schemes in the county of Kerry by the Congested Districts Board, for the year 1904-5.

MR. WALTER LONG: The representations were made by the Department of Agriculture, by whom and the county council the schemes are arranged.

Private Dolan, Royal Irish Rifles.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Private Terence Dolan, No. 3654, of the Royal Irish Rifles, is entitled to a retiring allowance; and whether, in view of the fact that this man has had twelve and a quarter years service, he will have a special inquiry made into the circumstances of his case.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): This man was granted a free discharge, after serving twelve years and 167 days, without any claim to pension. The case is not one, therefore, for the special inquiry suggested.

Valentia Island—Traders' Grievances.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether, with a view to obviating the loss which has fallen on traders in Valentia Island in consequence of the withdrawal of the Clyde Shipping Company's steamer, he will see that the Great Southern and Western Railway Company make proper provision for the storage and ferrying of goods from their terminus at Reenard.

MR. BONAR LAW: The Board of Trade have no statutory powers of intervention in the matters to which the hon. Member refers, but they have been informed by the railway company, to whom a copy of the Question was forwarded, that whilst they afford every reasonable accommodation for the storage of goods at their stations they have no powers which would enable them to work a ferry to Valentia Island.

The Amir.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the Amir has been erroneously described as Siraj-ul-millat-wa-ud-din in a Parliamentary Paper; whether he should have been set out as Siraju-'lmillat wa'd-din; whether he is aware that the name Habibulla is a contraction for Habibu Allah; and will the authorities see that this matter is at once put right to avoid further confusion.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am afraid that the hon. Member rather takes me out of my depth, but I am informed by competent persons that, while the transliteration of the Amir's title suggested by the hon. Gentleman may be somewhat more accurate than that habitually in use, the transliteration of his name is less accurate, and on the whole it is proposed to retain the present title.

South American Navies.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) : I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that two of the South American Governments having by treaty agreed to settle by arbitration all disputes that may arise between them have, since the conclusion of such treaty, sold several of their war ships; will he state the number of ships that have been so disposed of, and say if he has any information concerning the reported desire of the two Governments to sell the remainder of their ships of war; if he has no information upon the subject will he instruct the representatives of the British Government in those countries to obtain a copy of the arbitration treaty agreed to by the South American Governments, and also to ascertain what are the facts in regard to the disposal of their vessels of war; and will he lay such information upon the Table of the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The treaties to which the hon. Gentleman refers provided for a settlement of all controversies that do not affect the Constitution of their countries, and, if no other settlement is possible, by direct negotiation. The number of Chilean ships sold in this country was two, and of Argentine ships sold to Japan, two. His Majesty's Government are not aware of any intention to sell any others. I do not think that there is any objection to laying the terms of the treaty of arbitration on the Table of the House if the hon. Gentleman desires it.

Treaties of Arbitration.

MR. CREMER: I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state how many European Governments have, since this country and France concluded a treaty of arbitration, followed their example; whether the Convention held last year between the representatives of France and Great Britain was one of the results of the treaty; whether the Convention adjusted all the matters in dispute between the two countries; if any differences still exist between the two countries will he state what they are; and whether any steps are being taken to settle them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that twelve treaties have been negotiated though some of them have not as yet been ratified. There was no connection between the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904 and the treaty to which the hon. Gentleman refers, which was agreed to in 1903. There are no questions of controversy outstanding between France and this country which are likely to cause any interruption in the harmonious relations of the two Powers.

Naval Disarmament.

MR. CREMER: I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware of the feeling prevailing in France in favour of an arrest of armaments; and whether, having regard to the conclusions at which the Committee of Defence have arrived, that a successful invasion of this country is a practical impossibility, and that since the Committee arrived at that conclusion the Russian fleet has been destroyed, will he communicate with the French Government concerning the possibility of an understanding being arrived at between His Majesty's Government and the Government of France to discontinue their rivalry in armaments.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We have no official knowledge of the hon. Gentleman's statement. With regard to the concluding part of his Question, the subject is hardly one which can be dealt with properly by way of Question and Answer.

*MR. CREMER: Do I understand the Prime Minister to state that the Government are not willing to enter into negotiations with France on the subject indicated in the Question?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already answered a Question with regard to naval armaments, put to me by another hon. Member, and I pointed out then, as I may perhaps point out again, that the position of this country with regard to naval armaments is entirely different from that of any other country whatever. Naval armaments are to us an integral and absolutely necessary part of our national defence, and it does seem to me that it is for countries to whom fleets are not a necessary and integral part of, their

national defence to commence negotiations rather than for us.

MR. CREMER: But is not the right hon. Gentleman aware of the strong feeling in France in favour of disarmament?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is a question on which I have no official information. The hon. Member has quite as good an opportunity of forming a judgment as I have.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Third Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to give leave to Sir Henry Graham, K.C.B., the Clerk of the Parliaments, to attend to be examined as a Witness before the Committee of Public Accounts.—(*Sir Arthur Hayter.*)

NEW BILL.

PORT SANITARY AUTHORITIES EXPENSES BILL.

"To remove doubts as to the legality of certain payments by Port Sanitary Authorities," presented by Sir Walter Plummer; supported by Sir Joseph Dimsdale, Sir James Joicey, Sir Henry Seymour King, Mr. William Lawrence, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Mr. David MacIver, Sir Edward Reed, Mr. Robson, Sir John Barrington Simeon, Mr. Charles Wilson, and Mr. Yerburch; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 22nd June, and to be printed. [Bill 239.]

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT.

MR. SPEAKER addressed the House, announcing his intention of retiring from the Chair, as followeth (all the Members being uncovered):—

"Before the House passes to the Orders of the Day, perhaps it will allow me to occupy its time for a very few minutes. I have to announce to the

House that I propose to retire from the Chair to-morrow. That announcement is perhaps a formality. The fact is known already to all Members of the House, but it is a becoming and usual practice that when the Speaker retires from the Chair and gives up the office to which he was elected by this House, he should, if possible, personally intimate that intention to the House and state his reasons for retiring.

"My reason for retiring I can deal with very briefly. On the 10th of April last I had completed ten years of service in this Chair, and, thanks to the blessing of almost uninterrupted good health during that period, I was able to attend punctually and diligently to the service of the House. Some six weeks ago I became unfortunately disabled from continuing that service, nor do I yet feel able to perform the duties in the continuous and satisfactory manner in which they ought to be performed by the occupant of this Chair. Under these circumstances I have thought it right not to trespass any further on the indulgence of the House but to retire from my office, bearing in mind (I may add) that I have arrived at an age at which a wise man ought not to take too sanguine a view of his capacities for doing hard work and undertaking great responsibilities. Under these circumstances, therefore, I have thought it right to retire.

"I will not disguise from my brother Members that it is to me a very hard and painful thing to sever my connection with this House, with all its interests, its friendships, and its associations. It is not merely that I am relinquishing a high and honourable office in the tenure of which I have always taken a great and not unnatural pride; it is that I am quitting an Assembly by which, by every part of which, and I might truly say by every Member of which, I have always been treated personally with the greatest courtesy and consideration—a courtesy and consideration which fill my heart with lasting gratitude.

"I desire to take this opportunity of thanking the Clerks at the Table and the officials of the House for their loyal and efficient help to me in the discharge of my duties.

"Above all my thanks are due to the House itself, for the generous and traditional support which it has always accorded to me, a support without which the authority and the influence of the Chair could not exist.

"I thank the House very sincerely for having allowed me to say these few farewell words."

Whereupon Mr. A. J. Balfour and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman severally addressed the House, as follows:—

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It is with the greatest grief, Mr. Speaker, that the House will have heard both the declaration of your intention to resign the great office which you have held with such distinction and the reason which you have given for the relinquishment of that post. Many thoughts rise to one's mind, many words naturally rise to one's lips, but, as the House knows, this is not an occasion on which it would be in accordance with tradition nor would it in any way be proper for us to express the feelings which are shared by every man in this House, to whatever Party he may belong, or however long or short his experience may be of our deliberations; this is not an occasion on which it is proper for us to express to you what we think we have owed to you during the ten years of your service—of your ungrudging service. It is rather my duty on the present occasion to give notice to the House that I shall to-morrow, in accordance with tradition and usage, move two Resolutions. The first is as follows—

"That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for his distinguished services in the Chair for more than ten years, that he be assured that this House fully appreciates the zeal, ability, and impartiality with which he has discharged the duties of his high office through a period of unusual labour, difficulty, and anxiety, and the judgment and firmness with which he has maintained its privileges and its dignities, and that this House feels the strongest sense of his unremitting attention to the constantly increasing business of Parliament and of the uniform urbanity and kindness which have earned for him the respect and esteem of this House."

Mr. Speaker.

So runs the first Resolution which I shall move to-morrow, and it will be received, I doubt not, with the unanimous assent of the House. The second Resolution will be as follows—

"That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty praying His Majesty that he will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of his favour on the right hon. William Court Gully, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period during which he has with such distinguished ability and dignity presided in the Chair of this House, and assuring His Majesty that, whatever expenses His Majesty shall think fit to be incurred on that account, this House will make good the same."

I am sure those Resolutions, which have been moved for many of your distinguished predecessors, will never be moved in a House more ready to receive them with cordiality and enthusiasm.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I willingly and cordially join in the expression of regret, deep and profound regret, which has fallen from the First Lord of the Treasury. We are all aware, as he has reminded us, that this is not an occasion upon which formal expression of the feelings of the House of Commons is given. Leaving that formal expression over to-day, it is open to us very briefly and lightly to express our personal feelings towards you, Mr. Speaker, after the long relations which have subsisted between us. It will be a grievous thing to us to miss your familiar presence in the Chair. We shall lose in you a friend to every Member of the House, and we are well aware that the same friendly, and I would say even affectionate, spirit prevails on your side towards all the Members of the House as we entertain towards you. But this informal occasion is not that upon which we can best express the feelings which we entertain towards you and towards the office which you have held so worthily and with so much dignity. I reserve, therefore, for my part until to-morrow the fuller expression of the feelings of those who sit on this side of the House.

MR. SPEAKER then retired from the Chair on the House resolving itself into Committee.

SUPPLY [10th ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £154,925, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments, including a Grant in Aid."

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said he desired to take that opportunity of discussing the question of the organisation of certain Government Departments, and especially that of the Board of Trade and of the Local Government Board. He had put down an Amendment to reduce the Vote, but he hoped he would get from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade such assurances as would render it unnecessary for him to press that Motion to a division. The primary object he had in view was to draw the attention of the Committee to the delay which had taken place in reference to a subject which the House had debated more than once, namely, the urgent desirability of appointing a Minister of Commerce and Industry. He did not think that it was necessary that he should reargue the desirability of such an appointment, because the House had on more than one occasion indicated its general assent to the principle of the proposition that, while they must, of course, have regard to the defences of the country and to its armaments, it was also their duty to take care of the interests of trade and commerce, for the protection of which those armaments were undoubtedly necessary. He, however, thought that, compared with some other nations, the amount of attention given to commercial questions by the

Government of this country was not so great as it ought to be, and he hoped that the time was coming, if it had not already arrived, when trade questions would excite more interest than had hitherto been the case, and this was eminently necessary if we desired to retain our commercial pre-eminence.

Not only had the House indicated its strong desire that something in the shape of Departmental reorganisation should take place, but a Committee had sat upon the subject and had taken a large amount of evidence from representatives of chambers of commerce and others. That Committee had come to a conclusion which distinctly fortified his proposition. As other countries had special Departments and special Ministers of the highest rank and position for the purpose of giving individual attention to questions of trade, commerce, and industry, and also had organisations, through chambers of commerce and otherwise, which constantly placed at the disposal of those Ministers the most expert and latest information to enable them to deal with particular questions, he hoped that the Report of that Committee would at some early date be put into practical application, and that in addition some means would be devised—for which he believed there were now ample materials, through the Board of Trade Intelligence Committee—to enable a Minister of Commerce and Industry to have recourse to those means of information as to trade development which could scarcely fail to be of advantage in the administration of the Department. It had been stated that the effect of carrying out the Report in question would be chiefly to increase the salaries of the existing heads of the Board of Trade and of the Local Government Board, but he would remind the House that both existing Ministers had disclaimed any intention, if a change should be effected, of availing themselves of any pecuniary advantage. While he did not say that the political or Departmental *status* was necessarily connected with the question of salary, he was satisfied that the higher the *status* given to the Department of Trade, Commerce, and Industry, the greater would be its utility and influence, and the

greater would be the means at its disposal for promoting the commerce and industry of the country.

What had they in the shape of a Board of Trade? They had, it was true, a President of the Board of Trade, who, generally speaking, but not always, was a Cabinet Minister. There was, however, no Board at all. A Committee which dealt with this subject took evidence, which showed that no meetings of the Board had taken place for upwards of half a century. He thought that on the last occasion on which a meeting of the Board had taken place—it was a singular case of anachronism—it was represented by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who made his visit expressly for the purpose of advocating some improvement in the trade of Manchester. To-day the Board was composed not only of Archbishops and Bishops, but it included the Speaker of that House and also the Speaker of the Irish Parliament, a case of political obscurantism which it would be difficult to parallel.

He would like to draw attention to the Report of a Committee peculiarly qualified to discuss this subject. It was a Committee presided over by the Earl of Jersey, and it included among its members the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University and one of the hon. Members for Oldham, of whose experience in cotton and other industries they had had evidence in the speeches he had made from time to time in that House. The Report of that Committee set forth that evidence was given before it by one of the Members for Manchester, the president of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, and also by himself (the speaker) respecting other chambers of commerce, and that the evidence satisfied the Committee that the existing state of affairs was not satisfactory and was not conducive to the real interests of trade and commerce. The Report further pointed out that the Board of Trade never met, and that the responsibility for the conduct of its business rested solely with the President. Then it drew attention to the anomalies of the jurisdiction of the Board, which had to do with shipping, with railways, with labour disputes, and with many other matters. External foreign nego-

tiations, it was pointed out, relating to treaties and to Consular Reports were conducted really by the Commercial Department of the Foreign Office, and he was well aware that there was a difference of opinion as to whether such a subdivision of the duties in regard to trade and commerce should continue. The Committee further indicated their belief that the *status* of a Minister of Commerce in these days ought to be in every respect equal to that of a Secretary of State. Then their Report recognised the desirability of having a Minister of Commerce and Industry, and it urged that certain duties in relation to Consular appointments should be more or less conducted by the Board of Trade.

There was another Committee, whose Report had not been acted upon, in relation to our Consular Service. It had urged that some improvement was highly necessary in the opportunities for training our Consuls, so as to enable them to gain special knowledge in commercial qualifications. That was a point in regard to which he thought it would be admitted there was room for reform. The whole tendency of that Committee's Report was to revert to the view expressed in the House on previous occasions, that we ought to think seriously about the reorganisation of the Board of Trade. It was the unanimous and frequently expressed opinion of chambers of commerce, not merely of the London Chamber of Commerce but of all the chambers throughout the country, that this reform ought not to be longer delayed, and he appealed to his hon. friend the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, whose practical knowledge and business acquirements were such as to justify them in expecting their appeal to be successful, to give them some assurance that the Report of the Committee would not lie in the pigeon-holes of the Department any longer, and to tell them that something was to be done forthwith to reorganise the Board of Trade, and to allocate more specifically the duties—the anomalous duties—which in many cases it performed, partly to the Home Office, and partly to the Local Government Board, so that the Board of Trade might be strengthened for the performance of what ought to be its chief duty, namely,

to keep a watchful eye upon our commerce, and to aid and help, so far as Governments can help, private enterprise, and to aid the suggestion and performance of public works. The need for the performance of this latter duty he thought was strongly illustrated in the debate on the Port of London, in connection with which a state of affairs had arisen which induced many hon. Members to support the Bill presented to the House the other night, rather than that nothing at all should be done, in face of the strides made by the corporation and municipality and trading community of the Port of Antwerp where, at this moment, reforms were in process of execution which would cost upwards of £10,000,000. Those improvements would include the straightening of rivers by cutting off the bends, and so giving access of the best possible character to a port which was highly competitive with the ports of this country.

There was another Report on this subject in regard to which also comparatively little had been done, and that was the Report of the Board of Trade Intelligence Committee. That Committee had now been in existence for five years. It had been largely official and Departmental, representing the Colonies and India, and other Departments of the State, and, according to his experience, it had proved of considerable advantage, for it had been the means of grouping into co-operative action scattered Departments which performed more or less commercial and trade duties, and in unifying their action in aid of our trade and commerce. It had also, besides its more official members, distinctly representative members practically acquainted with, and engaged in, trade and commerce. Whatever it might have done or failed to do, he thought it would be acknowledged that the experiment, if he might so call it, of this Board of Trade Intelligence Committee had been of practical service, and had done a considerable amount of good, which would be increased now by reason of the removal of one of its principal offices into the City of London, where it was in close touch with the commercial community, and where it promised to render better service than it had rendered in the past. Its Report was

both useful and interesting. By supplying ordinary commercial information, and by answering questions which were most difficult to deal with, it had been able to give access to the most complete and latest information. He found also that it had responded to many thousands of inquiries on commercial matters, such as Customs duties, legalisation forms for the purpose of commercial travelling, openings for trade, statistical returns, sources of supply and prices, company legislation, trade-mark regulations and the like, and it had given a large amount of technical and statistical information to the commercial community.

In addition to that, commercial missions had been established, and had sent representatives of commerce to Persia and Siberia. The latter country at the present moment was more or less in a state of anarchy owing to the war, but it was a great corn-growing field, which would, when peace was restored, very largely supplement our corn supplies. The Report made by that Commission confirmed these conclusions, and had placed them in possession of a very large amount of matter of a most useful and practical character. Take the butter trade, for instance. They learnt from the Report that large quantities of what had been known as Danish butter really came to us from Siberia. In regard to many other forms of commerce information had been collected of an equally useful and practical character, and, through the Committee, it had been placed at the disposal of the commercial public. In addition to this a representative of this country had been appointed, who had the advantage of having been twice president of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, to act as visitant to Australia. He was on the point of visiting Australia and, no doubt, would find means of improving our commercial relations with that colony, relations which were amongst the most hopeful signs of the retention of our commercial prosperity.

One of the most important duties of the Committee had been to examine and report in the most minute detail on the tariffs and commercial treaties entered into by various nations.

Whatever view one might take on the fiscal question generally, all would agree as to the desirability of having full information on this point. All would agree that we should know how many tariffs were designed, not merely to protect, but to exclude the products of other countries. All would agree it was desirable to know how extremely onerous and absolutely exclusive many of these tariffs were. There might or there might not be a remedy suggested, and there might be political considerations which outweighed other considerations, but the facts were well worth observing and when they found, as they had been doing, that the result of representations had been in many cases to modify the restrictions upon our trade and commerce it would be admitted that in this matter the Committee had acted with advantage. In his opinion, there were many cases in which commercial treaties might at this moment materially improve the trade of the country. And if we were told that such treaties were not, in the fullest sense of the term, in accordance with the principles of free trade, his reply would be that there never was a more beneficial commercial treaty than the Treaty of 1860 with France, which was negotiated by Mr. Cobden himself, and which doubled the volume of trade between the two countries almost in the course of a day. One of the least acceptable lessons which they had derived from the Commercial Intelligence Committee was the fact that comparatively little could be accomplished, even by friendly representations; indeed, in some cases they found that such representations had a tendency to maintain the restriction. One point had been made very clear—that we gained mainly and chiefly from concessions made to other nations rather than to ourselves. Here, at any rate, we got the benefit of what was not a complete instrument of satisfaction, but what, after all, was a great advantage, viz., the favoured-nation treatment. This, according to their experience, was a most important factor, and they got more through it than was to be gained by pointing out objections which were felt, but which by the other side were considered to be advantages and which frequently were strongly retained for that reason.

He repeated that a Committee which collected facts and statistics, which examined treaties, and which watched the progress of negotiations between the different countries affected by those treaties, was able to form conclusions as to possibilities in the matter of negotiation or retaliation which must be of extreme value, especially as they emanated from an impartial body. They had had in Portugal for the last 500 or 600 years, not only an ally, but a commercially friendly nation. He believed the first treaty of commerce ever made was made in the reign of Edward III. with Portugal, and it was a singular fact that there were only one or two countries in Europe in which we did not get favoured-nation treatment and one of those countries was Portugal. No doubt there might be political considerations in her case sufficient to outweigh historic action. But undoubtedly in Portugal we had a most benevolent neutral throughout the South African War. Our interests there were largely common, but there were dynastic and other considerations which were entitled to full weight. There were questions connected with the wine and cattle trades with regard to which Portugal had claims which were well worthy of attention and thorough examination. Still, as he had said, the singular fact remained that with Portugal, with which country we had great trade and commercial relations, and to which we and the world owed the over-sea route to and from India, which was the making of our commerce, we had no commercial treaty. He did hope that as a result of what had been done by the Intelligence Committee, our representations would be received in a most friendly spirit, and that negotiations would be successfully conducted which would place us and Portugal, our friend and ally, on the same terms as we enjoyed with other countries.

He would like to point to one or two of the difficulties with which the Commercial Intelligence Committee had had to contend. In the first place he would like to ask his hon. friend whether it was the intention, as he believed it was, of the Government to continue this Committee in existence, and to strengthen its power for action by

making it more fully representative of the many trades of this country, so that it might be possible to focus in one centre the general practical commercial feeling of the country, apart altogether from anything in the shape of political or partisan feeling. In his opinion an impartial tribunal of that sort would be of the utmost advantage. In the next place this Commercial Intelligence Committee had hitherto been treated entirely as a consultative body, and in the Report to which he had made allusion a suggestion was thrown out that it might well be vested with more powers of initiative, at any rate to the extent of recommending to the Department commercial and other reforms which required an early solution—matters which, in the present-day methods of business, ought to be conducted with great despatch. In the past the Committee had lived upon almost nothing. They had had a magnificent grant at their disposal of perhaps £1,000 or £2,000 a year, but one of their last difficulties had been that when they had, by care and economy, accumulated a sum which they had hoped would enable them to carry out certain investigations in Australia, they found that owing to technical difficulties, the sum was no longer available. It was due to the Department to say it had promised that funds should be available for the purpose. He did not mention this by way of criticism, but he did hope that, having regard to what had been accomplished, the grant to the Committee would be materially increased. The House voted millions for destructive purposes; let it vote thousands for constructive purposes, especially to help and construct commerce. He hoped, too, the grant would not be disappointing in the future in the way of not being available when it was wanted. The present system, by which the savings of years could not be taken advantage of, was not an economical one. It tempted a Committee to be spendthrift when it should be economical; and it did not encourage the husbanding of resources. In conclusion, he hoped the House would endorse the view of the Committee that a Minister of Commerce and Industry should be appointed, and he trusted he should receive an assurance from the Secretary

to the Board of Trade that the Commercial Intelligence Committee would be placed on a wider basis, and receive more generous consideration at the hands of the Government.

*SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) said he supported the last speaker as he would like to see the position of the Board of Agriculture increased in importance in the same way as Sir Albert Rollit desired to see the Board of Trade treated. The Central Chamber of Agriculture desired to bring under the notice of the House the question of the want of weighbridges to be found at country stations. Of course these machines were provided at many large stations, but farmers and traders were constantly complaining of their absence from stations whence a good deal of agricultural produce was despatched. The Central Chamber of Agriculture, acting on the advice of the late Mr. Hanbury, and in the interest of traders and agriculturists who thought they had reason to complain of their treatment by the railway companies, had offered opposition to the Second Reading of the South-Eastern Railway Bill. It was a very invidious thing to have to do, but in the case of the South-Eastern Railway Company a blocking Motion had been put down to their Bill because of the deficiency of railway weighbridges. When the question came to be discussed with the representatives of the company they declined to enter into negotiations on the matter, declaring that in so doing they were acting, he understood, on the advice of the Railway Association, which was very powerful in that House. It would, therefore, become necessary to fight the principle out in the House itself, and he was, therefore, bringing it before the Committee that day and asking the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he would put pressure on the different railway companies to induce them to provide weighbridges where he, the Under-Secretary, considered it reasonable.

He would cite one or two cases where the difficulty existed. Swanley Junction had no weighbridge, yet it was the centre of a very great fruit industry, tons upon tons being dispatched to the London market. The fruit growers complained bitterly that they were obliged to accept

whatever their salesman liked to send them, and that although they might send five tons they might only be credited with four and three quarters tons, and they had no remedy as they could not prove the weight dispatched from Swanley. It was the same with the manure which they purchased in large quantities in London. They had to accept the weights of the vendor, for they had no means of weighing the manure on its arrival. The same complaint was made by the inhabitants of Milverton in Somerset. The station there served an area with a population of about 2,500, and it did seem reasonable that a weighbridge should be provided, but the company refused to provide one although those interested were willing to pay a reasonable charge for the use of it. He hoped the Secretary to the Board of Trade would look into this matter, and would not content himself with expressing a pious opinion that weighbridges should be supplied, but that he would inquire into the matter himself and if necessary put pressure on the companies in the matter.

There were also anomalies in the goods rates. On the North Somerset line, near Bristol—between that town and a station ten miles distant, corn was charged for at the rate of 2s. 7d. per ton, while the charge for cake was 3s. 4d. per ton. Both articles were conveyed in sacks, and he failed to see why such a difference was made in the charges. Complaints, too, had been made of the way in which owners' risks rates were being treated as regards milk in Buckinghamshire, and he hoped the hon. Gentleman would look into that matter, especially as when on a former occasion a like complaint was made against the Great Western Railway the matter was settled on fair terms. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would consider it his duty not merely to wait for complaints before taking action in regard to weighbridges, also that in matters of undue preference—even of the preference for the large against the small trader—his Department would look into the matter and take the initiative, without waiting to be asked to move. He begged to propose a reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries) be reduced by £100."—(*Sir Edward Strachey.*)

Sir Edward Strachey.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) called attention to an illegality or at least an invalidity in a regulation issued by Trinity House in reference to pilotage in the Thames Channel. In effect this regulation limited the number of firms which might employ pilots for ships passing out of the river. The Board of Trade had a revisory power over such regulations which, in this case, apparently had not been exercised, and the conditions of the Merchant Shipping Act had not been fulfilled. It was perfectly clear that any such regulation must first be made by alteration of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, by by-law. Secondly, that that by-law must be approved by Order in Council. Thirdly, that that by-law must be approved by the Board of Trade and issued in the terms prescribed by the Board of Trade. None of these conditions had been fulfilled by the licensing authority—Trinity House. Of course they must not make too much of an act which he considered *ultra vires*, but the power had been exercised by Trinity House. The relations between the pilots and Trinity House in the past had been of the most amicable and satisfactory character; but if these men were to be deprived of their livelihood by an act of the Board of Trade that was all the more reason why they should be sheltered by the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act. He did not wish to enter into the merits of the case; but only to enter his objection to the regulation being signed without the proper authority laid down by law. Trinity House had in its mind, no doubt, what might be called the distribution of the shipping to pilots. There were certain pilots who, piloting for two or three firms, earned £1,200 a year; but there were other pilots piloting also for two or three firms who could only make £400 or £500, and even as little as £300. Therefore a regulation of this sort was open to a great deal of contention and criticism. The pilotage regulations of 1854, which were reaffirmed by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, said—

"The present system of selection of their own pilots by owners, masters, and agents should be left undisturbed."

Now, the new regulation of Trinity House had broken, without full authority, that regulation imposed by Act of Parliament. He did not know whether

the new regulation had been made by the tacit consent of the Board of Trade; but out of sixty-four pilots forty-nine had petitioned Trinity House against it on the merits, and that petition had not met with favour. He urged the Secretary to the Board of Trade to make careful inquiry into this particular instance of the exercise of authority which he believed to be invalid.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) said that in the last fiscal Blue-book figures were given as to the condition of employment in Germany. Anything he had to say was not by way of criticism of the work done by the officials of the Board of Trade, who arranged their information with admirable care and knowledge. But in this particular set of figures in the Blue-book they had not sufficiently inquired into the full conditions of German employment before giving them to the public. It appeared from these figures that in a series of trades the percentage of unemployed in Germany was 1·9, which represented a total of unemployed of 8,600 out of a membership of the unions of 446,000. These figures were so startling that he was surprised that the Secretary to the Board of Trade should have accepted them without further inquiry. These figures could not be compared with the corresponding figures published by the English trade unions. In the first place in England the percentage of unemployed was based on the number of persons who received unemployed benefit who were members of the unions. But he was informed that in the German unions before a person became entitled to unemployed benefit he had to be contributor to the unemployed fund for four years. That meant that only persons of steady character were likely to contribute to the benefit fund for four years. It followed that the figures in the German Return referred only to the persons who had contributed for four years and not to all the persons who were out of employment. The figures for Germany and England could not, therefore, be properly compared. Next, in England unemployed benefit was usually given after a workman had been out of employment for three consecutive

days; while in Germany it was not given until the workman had been out of employment for seven consecutive days. Of course a larger number of men would be included in England as unemployed than in Germany.

Again, there was a difference between the systems in the two countries. In England the general rule was that there was a minimum wage, and the effect of that was that when trade was bad employers had to dismiss men because they could not put them on short time or on a lower wage. In the mining industry, colliers, when trade was slack, worked only three or four days instead of the full week; but in the metal trades the practice was to dismiss the men. In Germany the minimum wage did not exist, with the result that the German employers always kept their men in employment, but at a reduced number of hours or days in the week. There had been a Report issued that morning which showed that in the glass industry in England since the great strike of 1901, a half remained unemployed; but in Germany, in order to obviate the necessity of reducing the staff, short time was worked. The consequence of all this was that the figures given by the Board of Trade in regard to Germany could not be compared with the figures given by the English trade unions. When they turned to inquiries made in Germany, a totally different set of figures was given; and the best authority put the proportion of unemployed in four trades as follows: book printers 8·2; stone-masons 9·4; glove-workers 6·6, and bakers 7·6; and a census of the unemployed in Leipsic showed that in bad times the number was 13, 14, and 15 per cent., which was higher than they had ever seen in this country. He was sure an investigation would disclose a wholly different result from the figures quoted recently by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade; and they were entitled to ask him, in spite of his views on the fiscal question, to give a most impartial consideration to this matter.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars) said that although his views on the fiscal

question were well known they gave him added responsibility regarding the figures issued by his Department. With reference to this particular question, he would say that when he looked into the figures they seemed so surprising that he thought there must be some explanation of which he was not aware. He spoke to the head of the statistical department, who mentioned one or two influences which might have affected the result. One was that the rate of relief was so small in Germany that the people would not be so ready to apply for it as they would in this country. Possibly, as the result of that conversation, further inquiry was made, the results of which had not been received; but they did know enough to enable him to warn the hon. Member that when the results were known they would still show an enormous preponderance in favour of the amount of employment in Germany as compared with this country. The hon. Member stated that the Board of Trade figures must be bad, because in Great Britain in times of bad trade it was only the good workmen who were employed, and the bad workmen were left out. That, of course, meant that our system had the effect of increasing the number of the unemployed in this country. He would ask the hon. Member to reconcile his views with those of the Labour Members in this House on the matter.

The [next point of the hon. Member was that the number of unemployed in Germany was smaller because in particular trades instead of turning off men they worked a shorter time. He was perfectly certain the hon. Member knew what was known to every manufacturer on a large scale in this country, that exactly the same thing applied in the large trades.

MR. McKENNA: Not the metal trade.

MR. BONAR LAW said that was the trade to which he was about to refer as one, to which it distinctly applied. If orders for steel were scarce, no manufacturer would run his mill with fewer men. If he could not run it for the whole week, he would run it for four,

three, or two days, and leave it idle for the remainder of the week. He thought that so far as the information available could give the number of unemployed, the number of unemployed amongst trades unionists in Germany was enormously less than it was in this country.

MR. MARKS (Kent, Thanet) said he hoped the Board of Trade would consider a matter of growing importance from a labour, a national, and an Imperial standpoint. He referred to the increasing employment of foreign seamen in the mercantile marine.

THE CHAIRMAN: The mercantile marine is under another Vote.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said that the hon. Member for South Islington seemed to think that the great panacea for all their ills in regard to trade was that they should have a Minister of Commerce. For his part he had never been able to appreciate that, because the only suggestion made was that the President of the Board of Trade should be called the Minister of Commerce and that he should have a larger salary. He would be the last to think that the President of the Board of Trade would discharge his duties any better if he were called the Minister for Commerce, and he was unwilling to believe that if the President had a larger salary he would perform his duties better than he did now. He thought, however, there should be some change in the Board of Trade. It had far too much to do; and if some of its duties were given to another office he thought the country would be the gainer. He had been told—he did not know what truth there was in it—that the Home Office was the only Department that had not more than it could do. He thought, therefore, that some of the duties now discharged by the Board of Trade should be handed over to the Home Office. The Board of Trade had to look after shipping, railways, and trade, and if they had a real Board of Trade instead of the present Department it would be a good thing for the country. The hon. Member had said that when they were spending millions on the Army they

should spend a few thousands in helping trade. If a few thousands of pounds more or less would help trade, he thought no Member of this House would grudge them; but he knew sufficient to be aware that there was an enormous amount of money wasted in instructing people how to conduct their own business. If he was asked to make a recommendation he would say that they should not alter the position or salary of the President of the Board of Trade, but should split up the duties and have a Minister looking after railways and shipping, and leave it to a real President of a real Board of Trade to do nothing else than further the interests of the industry and commerce of the country.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent) said he wished to call attention to the issuing of Provisional Orders by the Board of Trade for the construction of light railways. When the Light Railways Act was passed eight years ago it was chiefly intended to provide means of transit in remote country districts. It was not intended that the railways should provide communication between one county and another, or that they should take the place of tramways. But the Act had been used in that way, and companies in constructing tramways under the Light Railways Act had been relieved of many considerations and obligations which would otherwise have attached to them if they had proceeded under the ordinary Tramways Act. In the course of the last eight years the position of matters had changed. There were now motor-buses which were quicker than the tramway, and the light railway was not now the best means of getting out of town. Under these light railway schemes not a farthing was paid in compensation to the persons whose houses the trams passed. He had always understood that no traffic of this sort was ever undertaken without compensation being paid to those people whose property was deteriorated in value or absolutely ruined by them. When there were no other means of locomotion these tramways might be allowed to go on, but now that they had motor-buses which did not in any way interfere with the roads, which did not necessitate the tearing up of the roads and the erection

of unsightly posts, and which were in every way better, and, above all, more speedy in getting from one part to another, they ought not to be allowed. Great dissatisfaction was felt in the country at the way in which this Act was used for constructing these tramways, and in regard to the way in which the Board of Trade had performed their duty. They had not considered in any way the inhabitants of the localities, nor had they considered the question of alternative routes. He ventured to say that in many parts of the country these Acts had been carried out in a most arbitrary way, and he thought the time had come when the Board of Trade should review their position with regard to light railways altogether, or should suspend their action and not issue so many of these Provisional Order Bills.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somersetshire, N.) called attention to the question of alien pilots and the manner in which pilotage certificates were granted to aliens. Hon. Members would recollect that in 1888 a Select Committee sat to consider the question of pilotage; the question of granting certificates to alien pilots was gone into, and ultimately the feeling of the Committee was against the employment of foreigners, though they made no very strong recommendation. In the concluding paragraph they did respectfully suggest that no possible opportunity should be lost by the Government of attempting to secure for this country reciprocity from those Powers on whom this advantage was conferred. He believed the number of foreigners who held pilotage certificates was fifty-nine. He regretted it was not possible to get a direct answer to some of the questions which had been repeatedly raised in the House but he should like some reply with regard to this question of alien pilots, and the getting of some sort of reciprocity from the Powers benefited.

MR. J. W. WILSON (Worcestershire, N.) asked to what extent the Board of Trade was able to, and did, use their influence in regard to the larger phases of policy of this country with reference to foreign trade. There were many ways, he said, in which their power could, and ought to be used for the

benefit of commerce and trade to overcome the difficulties which traders were left to surmount in their own way. For instance, a good deal had been said about preference, and what could be done with respect to that? The Government of the Transvaal at the present time was giving a much boasted preference to English trade, but in a large number of cases that preference was altogether absorbed by the shipping ring, for it was neither more nor less, whose steamers ran to South Africa. In many cases the rates from Hamburg and Antwerp were fully 5 per cent. lower than for British goods from British ports. That was a case in which the Board of Trade might have no power to interfere, but, for a business man at the head of an important Government office like the Board of Trade, there must be ways in which he could make his influence felt for the benefit of the trade of the country. One instance that must occur to all was that commercial institution of the Government, the Post Office, which in giving out the mails must influence an enormous amount of traffic. He contended that the Government ought to join the traders and try and smooth away the obstacles which hindered our trade in any particular channel. In such ways as that he thought great good would come to the trade of this country. In other cases the Government might assist the traders on many occasions by means of retaliation. There must be many articles in which the hon. Gentleman could make his influence felt in the direction of foreign rates which would have an immediate effect in ameliorating and smoothing the channels of trade. He would be out of order in referring to the many treaties made by the Foreign Office with other Powers, but even in those surely the President of the Board of Trade should have a voice as to the way in which those treaties, so far as they affected the trade of the country, should be made. He desired to see the Government carry on the country in the same way as a body of directors carried on a great concern, with all the interest of the country at heart.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said he hoped the Board of Trade would take an early opportunity of inquiring into the matter of alien pilots

with a view to seeing that no more certificates were issued to foreigners.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he thought the Committee was indebted to the hon. Member for Worcestershire for drawing attention to the question of shipping rates. How was it possible for our manufacturers to compete in the South African market when it was possible to send goods from New York at half the carriage? That was a very serious matter, and one that made all the difference so far as competing in that market was concerned. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would give his attention to this matter in such a way as to, if possible, assist the traders. They, no doubt, had his sympathy, but at the same time they would like to see him tackle this question. They heard a good deal of what the Board of Trade could and could not do, but if the Board of Trade made up its mind that this arrangement should be demolished it would be easy enough to carry out a scheme. He, therefore, hoped with some confidence that the hon. Gentleman would devote himself to this matter, in which he might be able to do a great deal of good for the country.

With regard to overcrowding on railways at the present time, the hon. Gentleman had power to stop it at any moment. Nobody could say it was not dangerous for fifteen or twenty people to be packed in a carriage travelling at a considerable speed. And all the Board of Trade had to do was to see how far this evil existed and how it could best be remedied. It was difficult for the companies, when people were crowding into carriages, to tell them they could not go. The only remedy was to have sufficient carriages to meet the traffic, as it was a matter of almost daily occurrence.

He desired also to refer to the working of the Patent Office under the new rules. As the result of a Committee appointed some years ago certain recommendations were made, some of which were carried out. The new rules were for the purpose of saving the time and money of the poor inventor, but the only practical result had been to benefit the patent agents, whose business had gone up by leaps and bounds. The search now made was with reference to British

patents only, but to be of any use to the inventor it should be extended to foreign countries, especially Germany and America, so that he might know whether his invention was one upon which he could with advantage spend capital. He would be glad to hear the views of the Secretary to the Board of Trade as to the working of the new rules and as to an extension of the search to foreign countries.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W. R., Keighley) was understood to ask for an explanation of the apparent confusion of powers between the Board of Trade and the Foreign Office with regard to Consuls abroad. Foreign Consuls had many duties of various kinds to perform, but he did not know whether the Board of Trade had any influence in the matter of their appointment. Where Consuls were appointed for commercial purposes he suggested it was very desirable that the Board of Trade should have some voice in the appointment, whereas in other cases it might be a question solely for the Foreign Office. It was a mistake to appoint Consuls and expect them to know all the details of a particular trade. A much better plan would be for the Board of Trade to encourage local chambers of commerce or similar bodies to send out agents of their own and for the Government Departments to give them all the facilities they could in the conduct of their inquiries. Such agents had been sent out in connection with the cotton and iron trades, and the Board of Trade could not do better than press forward the idea of sending out deputations with special reference to particular trades or interests.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) desired to emphasise what had been said with regard to the conditions of shipping to South Africa. Those conditions were, he believed, one of the reasons why the prosperity of South Africa had not come up to expectations. Not merely was there a ring of shipowners charging exorbitant rates, but they had a most objectionable system of doing business. Shipping firms allowed large rebates, but if any trader happened to send a single package by another line he lost all right

to rebates, and the rebates were paid only after long periods so that the fear of their loss might be held as a sword of Damocles over the heads of the traders. The shipping combination must be fought by traders as traders, and they asked the Government to join them, not *qua* Government but *qua* trader. South Africa produced practically nothing but gold and diamonds, and therefore had to be fed almost entirely by shipping. The Government were large traders, and he suggested that there should be an interchange of communication between the various Departments in regard to this matter, so that they might use their influence as a whole, for the sake of the colony and the traders, to break down this stifling and injurious monopoly.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) desired to call attention to the action of the Board of Trade in reference to the "boy sailor" scheme initiated with a great flourish of trumpets under the auspices of the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for Croydon. That scheme on its initiation was described as an attempt to rehabilitate the mercantile marine in the direction of the greater employment of British labour and British seamen. Various views might be held by those who composed the Board of Trade as to the success of the scheme, and a similar diversity of view might obtain amongst the shipping companies. It was admitted that during the first four years of the scheme no less than 4,373 apprentices were carried, and a total payment of £13,653 was made. The Board of Trade recognising that, in the normal course the scheme would come to an end on March 31st, 1905, put themselves in communication with representatives of the shipping interest. On November 8th, 1904, they indited a letter in which they discussed the desirability or otherwise of continuing the scheme, the basis of which really consisted in a rebate from the light dues. The Board of Trade attributed the "partial success" of the scheme to its connection with the light dues, to the extreme inequality of the amounts payable under the rebate system, and the want of a guarantee to the shipowners that they would not lose the services of their boys as soon as they had become useful. He did not intend to wholly

controvert the reasoning of the Board of Trade on the subject. He believed that shipowners generally would agree that it would be better that any scheme for increasing the employment of British seamen on British ships should not be connected with the light dues, which were admittedly unequal and unfair in incidence.

There were also other features of the scheme which rendered it undesirable from every point of view. But what he desired to call attention to was the extraordinary action of the Board of Trade in discontinuing the system without offering in any way to substitute for it another scheme which would commend itself to shipowners and the general public. In their Memorandum of November 8th, 1904, the Board of Trade said—

“It would appear . . . that there is no lack of boys ready to go to sea, and that shipowners generally are prepared to take and train boys as deck hands provided they can do so without pecuniary loss to themselves. In these circumstances it is surely desirable to let the present ‘boy sailor’ scheme die a natural death on the 31st March, 1905, and to devise an economical plan which shall at once appeal to both shipowners and probationers, with inducements to the former to train the lads and to the latter to stick by their masters.”

That was the attitude of the Board of Trade on November 8th, 1904, when for reasons which he did not criticise they decided not to renew the “boy sailor” scheme. On February 13th, the Board of Trade came to the conclusion that they were not justified in going on with the scheme or in proceeding with any alternative scheme from which the Navy might derive certain benefits. What he desired to make perfectly clear was that in thus summarily breaking off negotiations with those who represented the shipping interest, the Board of Trade had not given adequate reasons for so doing, and had not made plain to the general public why, having started upon this course of rehabilitating British labour in British ships, they had now summarily abandoned it and offered no substitute whatever. As far as shipowners were concerned he thought he was justified in saying that they were perfectly prepared to meet the Board of Trade in this matter. The responsibility for leaving

this great question hanging in the air did not rest with the shipowners but with the Board of Trade and the Admiralty. The shipowners had from the first been willing to consider any scheme or any suggestion which could be put forward by either of those two great Departments, and the responsibility rested with the representative of the Board of Trade in that House to state clearly for the information of the general public why the scheme inaugurated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon had been allowed to lapse, and why no adequate substitute dealing with this great question of boy sailors had been brought forward by the Department. He did not know what explanation would be offered, and all he could say was that the written explanations which had been given so far were totally inadequate. Speaking on behalf of shipowners generally, he desired to say that the responsibility for the abandonment of this question lay not with them but with the Department of State who, knowing perfectly well that one scheme was about to lapse, had, without any apparent reason, suddenly dropped the whole question.

MR. BONAR LAW, who was very indistinctly heard, said with regard to the main subject which had been brought forward and the one which seemed to him the most important—namely, a change in the *status* of the Board of Trade—that the view of the House appeared to be almost unanimous in favour of some change. On that he had to say that the Government had drafted a Bill carrying out the promise given in the King’s Speech, and they expected and intended, so far as they could, to see it carried into law that session. What was felt by every one who had thought about the matter was that a Department which dealt with the trade and commerce of this country could not hope to deal with them efficiently or even decently if it was not constantly in touch with men who were engaged practically in commerce. Of all the ways of coming into touch with commercial men he knew none better than the Commercial Intelligence Department, and it was gratifying to know that there was pretty keen competition for places on the new

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Commercial Intelligence Committee. The difficulty of the Board of Trade was not to find competent and useful men, but that they must leave out men who were perfectly competent and desired to serve. He wished to point out to the House that there was very considerable difficulty in framing the reference to such a Committee which would include everything which the Committee ought to do and would not include something they ought not to do. The real danger of a permanent Committee was in two directions. On the one hand there was a natural temptation to the permanent officials to look upon themselves as professionals and on such a Committee as amateurs. On the other hand there was the danger that members of the Committee might be tempted to devote their energies to what happened to be the subject of popular interest at the moment. He thought nothing could be more fatal to the real usefulness of such a Committee than that issues of that kind should be raised. In the Civil Service, he believed, they had men trying to make their departments as efficient as they could, and such men realised that the great weakness they had was that they had not the means of coming practically into contact with those subjects with which they dealt and of coming directly into touch with the people who represented all the important trades in this country, as this Committee would do.

His hon. friend had complained that too little money had been placed at the disposal of the Committee. It was true that the grant-in-aid which up to that year had been given to the Committee had been withdrawn; but it had been withdrawn not because the Government objected to the money being spent, but because the Public Accounts Committee took exception to the form in which it had been given. The Government were perfectly willing that the money should be granted, and it would appear in the Estimates which the Committee were asked to pass that day. The amount of the grant-in-aid before was only £1,000. In this year's Estimates £1,000 was put down as well as £1,200 which was put down for the expenses of agents in South Africa and agents who, he hoped, were going to be appointed in other colonies. Therefore the Committee would have now

£2,200 instead of £1,000; but he did not pretend that that was all the money they would require, and he thought the Treasury would not show such a short-sighted policy in economy as to deprive them of what money they required. Every case that had been brought to his notice had been thoroughly gone into. He could not say more on that subject at present, because a Committee had been specially appointed to deal with it. That Committee was now sitting, and it would obviously be out of place to say more until it had reported.

His hon. friend the Member for North Somerset called attention to the question of alien pilotage. That was really a very important matter, and the President of the Board of Trade had shown his interest in it by receiving a deputation on the subject. The question of preferential rates to South Africa was also one with which the Government were anxious to deal. He had been asked whether more could not be done for the commercial interests of the country by way of negotiation of treaties between this and other countries. If his hon. friend who raised this question looked at it from a business point of view he would not be long in coming to the conclusion that they would negotiate most effectively if they had something to give. With regard to the complaint that Consuls had not sufficient commercial experience and training, the object of the Board of Trade was to secure Consuls who would be more interested in trade. Their views on the subject had been accepted by the Foreign Office. Replies from Consuls could now be received without the intervention of the Foreign Office. As to the matter to which his hon. friend for the Toxteth Division of Liverpool had called attention, namely, that the Board of Trade should do more in regard to the employment of British seamen on board our mercantile marine, he hoped that some good results would follow from the scheme which had already been proposed. It was in the interest of this country from the point of view of having sailors for the Navy that such a scheme should be carried into effect. He would ask the House whether it would be proper that there should be a vote of money for that purpose. The hon. Member had stated that a great

many shipowners were anxious that such a scheme should be carried into effect.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR: I said that the shipowners denied responsibility for adopting a scheme which the Board of Trade and the Admiralty jointly put forward on their own initiative.

MR. BONAR LAW said he understood the hon. Member to say more than that. He understood him to say that the majority of the shipowners were dissatisfied with the scheme. It meant money, and the Board of Trade would consider any suggestions which the shipowners had to make on the financial aspect of the question. Reference had been made to the overcrowding on railways. He had made inquiry into that question, and he found that the Board had really no power to deal with it.

MR. DALZIEL said inquiry might be made with the view to legislation on the subject.

MR. BONAR LAW said the people who overcrowded carriages wished to be carried. It was obviously impossible at holiday times to avoid overcrowding taking place, and there must be some allowance made in such cases.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said the discussion that afternoon had ranged over a great variety of subjects, and that fact was interesting as showing the many departments of our national work with which the Board of Trade was concerned. He wished to make a few remarks as to the proposal, recently put forward, that the *status* of the Board of Trade should be raised, and the staff strengthened. The Secretary to the Board of Trade had just said that the Government were going to bring forward their Bill this session. He would like to say to the hon. Gentleman that if the Government were going to pass the measure they had better, to use a colloquial expression, hurry up. There would be a great deal to do in what remained of the session after the Whitsuntide recess. There were several questions of considerable difficulty still to be settled, and if the Government meant to settle this question the sooner they brought in the Bill the better. He had not heard that any Member desired to oppose it. It had been shown by the

Committee that inquired into the matter that a change was desirable. The varied work of the Board of Trade touched some of the greatest interests of the country, and it was right that the Department should be properly organised. The commercial classes had frequently represented that they wanted the Board of Trade to be a Board of Commerce. He took this opportunity afforded by the prospective change to suggest that it would be well if commercial men would state more definitely than they had ever yet done what they desired the Board of Trade to do. The Board at present were chiefly concerned in putting in force certain statutes in relation to railways, shipping, patents, and other matters, and a desire had been expressed in many quarters that they should do more to promote and encourage trade. He would put it to those Members of the House who were interested in the question, and the much larger number of people in the country who were interested in it, that they should now suggest some means by which the Governmental organisation could be made more useful for the purpose of a Board of Trade.

One method was clear, and that was to provide more complete intelligence upon all questions relating to tariffs, markets, modes of communication, and so forth. In that direction substantial progress had been made. The Committee was a good one and had worked well. When he was at the Board of Trade it was contemplated to appoint other Committees who would provide the Intelligence Department with information in other directions as well as from abroad. Two difficulties had been mentioned by the Secretary to the Board of Trade. One was the difficulty of bringing officials to run in harness along with outsiders. The other was the question of preventing the Committee from entering on thorny and controversial grounds. He did not think there was much in the first difficulty. The officials of the Board of Trade were men of great competence, zeal, and earnestness, and were perfectly willing to take advantage of all the light they could obtain from commercial men outside. He did not, therefore, believe that they would be at all jealous of having such men associated with them in the work with which they had to deal. He

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believed that if it was thought desirable to organise Committees in regard to the great manufacturing industries of the country there would be no difficulty. The other difficulty was more serious—that of calling into existence a body to deal with questions that might arise which in one sense were commercial questions but which had a political side and in which political controversy was involved. On such questions it might be very difficult to give the Committee its head and prevent it being made an organ for expressing controversial opinions. In that case the Board of Trade might be accused of nominating members of the Committee who would favour their views. It would be necessary in a matter of that kind to proceed with great caution; but the idea was a fertile one and he did not despair of getting over the difficulty to which the Secretary to the Board of Trade had referred.

With regard to the Report of the Committee on the appointment of Consuls, he wished that the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had been present, as he would have liked to ask the noble Lord what in the world the Foreign Office were going to do with this Report. It was now a year since the Report had been submitted to the House. It was an excellent Report; it was discussed in the House more than a year ago and was received with universal approval. The Foreign Office had been asked why they had not given effect to it and there was no answer. He hoped that the words used in the House in regard to that Report would reach the exalted head of the Foreign Office. He could not see why the recommendations in the Report should not be given effect to, or why the Foreign Office should be so long in taking a step so clearly in the interest of the commercial community.

MR. BONAR LAW said he had no right to speak for the Foreign Office, but it was his duty to know that they had adopted the Report, and that the reason why no action had been taken was that there had been no vacancies.

MR. BRYCE said he was very glad to hear what the Secretary to the Board of Trade had said. It was certainly a very good thing that the Consuls should

be in the closest relations with the Intelligence Department of the Board of Trade. It would also be a very good thing if we had more travelling officers, like the gentleman who went three or four years ago to South America, or the gentleman at present reporting in Siberia, who could travel about and bring home up-to-date information in regard to the conditions and prospects of trade. Consuls when at home on leave should also be encouraged to go round the manufacturing centres to tell manufacturers what they knew about the lands in which they were stationed, and to receive hints from the manufacturers as to the form in which they should draw up their Reports. He was encouraged to say this, because he happened to know of a young Consul who did that very thing and who told him that he had got many valuable suggestions from manufacturers, and had, he believed, been able in return to make suggestions which would be valuable to the manufacturers. If the Government Department got into more direct touch with the commercial classes, and if the latter knew a little better than they did that the Department was anxious to help and had a desire for their co-operation, he thought a great deal might be done to contribute to that result.

He would suggest to the Government that if they were going to carry this Bill for altering the *status* of the Board of Trade, they would find themselves faced with a very important question, viz., that of determining the relation between the different Department of the State as regarded labour subjects. The labour work was at present partly in the hands of the Board of Trade and partly in those of the Home Office; and considerable inconvenience had arisen from the undefined nature of the functions of each. The consequence was a considerable amount of overlapping. On the other hand, it would be a great disadvantage to take all the labour work from the Board of Trade and give it to the Home Office, because the administrative work connected with the railways could not be separated from the Board of Trade. Therefore this question had got to be faced in the reconstitution of the Board of Trade and the increase in its staff which might be necessary. This was a very good time to face the question, and in the endeavour to meet the desires of the

representatives of the working classes the Board of Trade should be fully organised for the purpose of dealing with labour work.

A very important question was raised by the hon. Member for Liverpool about the provision of sailors, but so few representatives of the shipping interest being present that subject could not be entered into that day. In regard to the overcrowding of railway trains, a subject which had been raised by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, he did not quite accept the views of the Secretary to the Board of Trade. It was quite true that the Board had not statutory powers in regard to the matter, and therefore could not apply compulsion; but, apart from compulsory powers, there was much which the Board could do. It had so many functions in relation to railways that any representations which the Board made would have influence with the companies in working their lines. The Board could so easily avert from the railway companies public hostility that the railway companies were bound to listen with care and attention to the representations made to them by the Board of Trade. He would, therefore, be disappointed if the Board of Trade intended to leave this question alone. It was a question which really fell within the general functions which Parliament had given them in relation to the internal communications of the country, and the Board ought to use this species of reserve power. For instance, they could threaten the railway companies with legislation, which had been found to be very efficacious in past times. He was glad to join in what had been said by the Secretary to the Board of Trade in regard to the confidence which hon. Members had expressed in its present work; and he hoped that in the more enlarged and dignified field contemplated for it, the Board would continue to justify the confidence of the House in its administration as it had hitherto done.

*MR. RITCHIE (Croydon) said that a matter had been discussed by the hon. Member for Liverpool in which he felt some paternal interest; that was the scheme for the training of boy sailors which was inaugurated when he was at the Board of Trade. His hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade made an

observation which he was bound to say he could not agree with. In reply to the hon. Member for Liverpool, the Secretary to the Board of Trade said that the reason for abandoning the scheme was that the Admiralty had intimated that the scheme was not found to be of any advantage to the Navy, for the benefit of which it was originally started. He absolutely denied that. No doubt it was expected when the scheme was proposed that it would be useful to the Navy by training lads who would be afterwards available for the Naval Reserve, but one of his objects, as the author of the scheme, in pressing it on the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the education of boys to become sailors for the mercantile marine. It was matter for much complaint and great cause of regret that our mercantile marine was largely manned by foreign sailors. Sharing that regret, although he did not take the extreme views which some people did in regard to foreign sailors, he thought it would be of advantage both to the mercantile marine and the Navy to have boys educated for the sea service. One of the objects he had in his mind was a supply of seamen to the merchant service, and only on that ground was he justified in asking the assistance of shipowners. He knew perfectly well that the amount that would be received from the light dues would not be sufficient to compensate shipowners for the cost of training boys; but, incidentally, it would be a great advantage to the mercantile marine to have a large number of trained sailors. He was sorry that the scheme had been dropped without anything being substituted for it. The explanation that had been given was wholly inadequate. He would rather have seen the Government putting forward another scheme affording greater inducements to the shipowners. It was true that the shipowners did not respond to the extent anticipated; and he thought the shipowners might have taken greater advantage of the opportunity presented to them than they had done. If a still larger contribution from the light dues would have induced shipowners to take greater advantage of the opportunity he would not have opposed a larger grant. There were no doubt considerable difficulties in carrying out the

scheme, and it had not had quite the result that they anticipated, but the Board of Trade should have considered the possibility of substituting for it a scheme that would produce better results.

It was a great satisfaction to him to know that the Commercial Intelligence Department, which was inaugurated while he was at the Board of Trade, had been so successful and that further developments were in progress. He had always been of opinion that the able staff of the Board of Trade, in co-operation with members of the mercantile community, who understood the wants of the mercantile community, could in many ways help forward the commerce of this country. He agreed that there should be a large increase in the number of commercial agents abroad, who should endeavour to ascertain exactly what it was that was hindering British trade and promoting foreign trade at our cost. But commercial men in this country were somewhat to blame. He thought they had not adopted the means at their disposal for promoting their trade in foreign countries. No one could read the Reports of our Consuls without seeing how much behind their foreign competitors the commercial community of this country were in pushing their wares abroad and in satisfying the wants of the people whom they desired to supply. The fact was that for so many years this country had been such a great exporter when there was comparatively so little competition, that it had not been a question of what foreign countries wanted, but what this country wished to supply. All that was now changed. He had always thought that some of the work of the Commercial Department of the Foreign Office might with advantage be transferred to the Board of Trade. Consuls had, however, diplomatic duties to perform as well as commercial duties, and could not be wholly dissociated from the Foreign Office. The present President of the Board of Trade had himself the supervision of the Commercial Department of the Foreign Office when he was Under-Secretary, and no better opportunity for bringing the two Departments into harmony could arise.

He was pleased to hear that a Bill was in preparation for increasing the *status* and the responsibilities of the Board of Trade. It was a scandal that in this great commercial country the Board of Trade should be a second-class office. There was no Department in this country which ought to be more fully equipped, or ought to occupy a higher position, than the Board of Trade. It was certain that if the Government brought forward the Bill without undue delay it would meet with practically the unanimous consent of the House. He was glad that the views he had always held were likely to be realised soon. He had been in many offices during his Parliamentary career. In all of them he had the greatest admiration, not only for the capacity, but for the desire of the permanent officials to promote the interests committed to their charge, but he was certain that in no office would the staff more gladly welcome the co-operation of commercial men than at the Board of Trade. He was convinced that by co-operation between the mercantile community and the Board of Trade the commercial interests of the country could be advanced. He was glad that the Board of Trade was so ably represented in that House by his hon. friend the Parliamentary Secretary.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said he cordially concurred with the right hon. Gentleman with reference to his estimate of the scheme for training lads for the mercantile marine, and he trusted that some effective solution would be found. It was not by training youths for the Navy alone, but in other ways that they could attract British seamen to the mercantile marine. At present seamen were not included in the Workmen's Compensation Act, though it was sought to meet their case by an Amendment of the Merchant Shipping Act.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not in order in discussing this question now.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON said he was reminded of the subject by what was said by the right hon. Gentleman in regard to this scheme, and he hoped that the Government would give an indication

of the course they intended to pursue in the matter.

*MR. CUMMING, MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) said he wished to call attention to the overcrowding of railway trains. He did not refer only to excursion trains, but to ordinary trains. The situation at Liverpool Street Station and the South-Eastern terminus was perfectly scandalous every evening. Men and women were hustled together in railway carriages; often times, in fact every evening, double the amount of passengers were crammed and jammed into the space authorised by law in each compartment. How it was more accidents to life and limb had not occurred under such circumstances was more due to the courtesy and forbearance of the passengers than the proper preparations of the railway companies to meet the necessities of the case; and if the Board of Trade had not the power to remedy the matter, an Act of Parliament should be introduced to give the Board of Trade full power to adjust so great a grievance.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade told the old story that the Board of Trade had not sufficient power to deal with railway companies. But that was no answer. The Board could not compel railway companies, but they had power to tackle the railway companies in a way no one else had. The Board had the power of initiating legislation which would affect railway companies very seriously. The grievances with respect to differential rates and weighbridges were strongly felt by the farmers of the country, and it was no answer for the Board of Trade to say they had no powers. They could investigate the matters alluded to and endeavour to do something, instead of remaining inactive unless stirred up from outside. What the Department always said was that nobody had brought a definite case before them on which they could proceed. But that was not what was asked for. What was asked for was a general investigation, and that the facts should be put within reach of the general public. For instance, in the case of overcrowding on railways, if the facts were brought within reach of the public such pressure would be brought to bear

on the railway company that if it were proved that the railway was overcrowded there would be no question as to any opposition to a competing railway, the company in such a case would hardly have a *locus standi*. The farmer and trader were not in a position to stir up the Board of Trade, and it was necessary that the Department itself should take the initiative. Unless some more satisfactory reply was given he hoped his hon. friend would go to a division.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford) said it was a great relief for people to know that at last we were going to have a Ministry of Commerce. When we compared the policy of this country with that of others in regard to this matter, everybody must recognise that we had fallen far behind the times in the methods we had adopted in looking after our commercial interests. Contrast our system with that of America. In 1901 President Roosevelt thought there should be created a Cabinet Minister who should deal with commerce and in the broader sense with whatever concerned labour, great business corporations, and so forth. Within a few months of that declaration the United States of America had a complete Ministry of Commerce, framed in such a way as to enable them to study commerce in every particular, and do their best to further it in every direction and foster it all over the world. We still clung to the policy of *laissez faire*, hindrance, and difficulty. We could see by that how far we were behind the times in this matter, and it was that which accounted for the great depression in this country. What was it that was wanted? We had Consuls abroad, and we had a great Department at home, and we had one or two commercial *attaches* who were notoriously overworked, who had not only to supply details as to the capitals in which they lived, but of two or three countries besides. Compare that system with that of America, who spent twenty times as much as we on collecting this information, which was absolutely necessary if people desired to live up to the times and not to be hindered or get into bad grooves. It was notorious that our Consuls and *attaches* were behind the times. He recognised that

Mr. Munro Ferguson.

an inquiry had been granted to consider these matters, and no doubt in time we should have a complete staff of Consuls and commercial *attaches*, but that method was very slow.

As regards railways, the methods adopted were not only expensive, but absolutely unbusinesslike. If a railway was to be built for the convenience of trade, the promoters of that railway had to come to the House for powers, but, instead of offering any facilities, the procedure necessary to obtain Parliamentary powers was the most expensive in the world, and be it remembered that the thousands and thousands of pounds that were spent in promoting and opposing railways were in the end all added to the railway rates. Why should not the inquiry instituted by the Board of Agriculture as to railway rates be extended so as to include all kinds of goods, manufactured and otherwise, carried by rail, so that the Board of Trade could obtain information on these points. We were not even in touch with our own Colonies. How could we be so while the President of the Board of Trade had no representatives there? All these things injured the trade of this country. They were present to everyone's mind and should be faced. With regard to railway rates and traffic generally, we should do something to use our great waterways, as was done on the Continent, where the farmers and others only had to put their goods on the boats on the canals and get them carried at a nominal cost.

It was time that a Bill to create a Ministry of Commerce was passed in that House. If the Government did not pass it, the Opposition would do it the moment they came into office. It would not be a difficult Bill to pass, but it would have to be one which would provide for all our commercial interests and provide for consultations with the Minister of Commerce. At the present moment the President of the Board of Trade, although he had an Advisory Board, never called it together or presided at its deliberations. The Board met in a separate chamber, and the right hon. Gentleman did not know what resolutions were passed or what reforms were required. When the Board of Trade allowed everything to go on

without any supervision, the time had arrived for the Ministry of Commerce Bill to be introduced and passed without delay. The last stage of the session was approaching, and Parliament was expiring; surely the promise of legislation should now be redeemed. He hoped the Minister of Commerce when appointed would not be a Member of the other House. He did not complain of the representation of the Board of Trade in this House; probably his hon. friend would be the new Minister, and then, if he were invested with all the powers necessary, a step would have been taken which perhaps more than any fiscal reform would enable us to compete successfully with foreign nations.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.) called attention to the great hardship suffered by traders under the "owner's risk" system of carriage. It would be out of order to suggest legislation, so he merely urged that the Board of Trade should make representations to the railway and steamship companies on the subject, and bring to bear all the pressure they could in order to make those companies realise more thoroughly the unsatisfactory state of affairs which now obtained. Our Colonies were more advanced in these matters than the mother country. New Zealand and Canada had adopted rates which freed the owner from all risk of damage in transit, and a similar course had been taken by the French Government. It was an urgent question, and the Board of Trade ought to be alive to the necessity of some change. To cope satisfactorily with the growing evil, legislation would ultimately be necessary, but in the meantime to ease the situation much might be done through representations to the carrying companies from the Board of Trade. He could give countless instances where owners had suffered loss to the extent of hundreds of thousands of pounds through the present unsatisfactory system. It was no answer to say that by paying a higher rate they could throw the responsibility upon the carrying companies. Competition was so keen and rates were already so high that traders were compelled to accept the lower scale of charges, and to run the risk which ought in justice to fall on the companies. He hoped the

Secretary to the Board of Trade would give this matter his serious consideration.

Mr. DALZIEL regretted that the Secretary to the Board of Trade had not given a more encouraging reply. The hon. Gentleman had apparently donned the official garb, and intended to get the Vote through as quickly as possible, and then nothing more would be heard of the matter until next year. As a business man representing a business constituency, it had been hoped that the hon. Gentleman would devote himself seriously to the grievances suffered by the trading community, but the hopes had not been realised. The question of overcrowding was not a bank holiday matter; it was an every-day occurrence. Working men and city men travelled to business day after day in carriages containing twelve or fifteen persons huddled together like cattle. Was that to be allowed to continue? He contended that the Department had power to deal with the matter. It could be stopped as constituting a danger to the travelling public. Moreover, pressure could be brought to bear in connection with the Orders which railway companies asked for, the additional powers which they sought, and in a hundred and one other ways. The hon. Gentleman should go and see for himself what was going on, and then, if he still held that his powers were not sufficient to enable him to deal with the matter, he should make representations to the chief of the Cabinet in order that the necessary powers might be obtained. He maintained, however, that the existing powers, properly administered, were sufficient to put an end to this public scandal.

The question of South African rates of freight, upon which no satisfactory reply had been given, was of the utmost importance to the trading community. In his own constituency they were losing contracts to the value of thousands of pounds every year because of the existing state of things. Goods could be sent at half the rates from America, with the result that the British trader was practically shut out of the South African market. A monopoly of the trade was in the hands of a particular ring, and prices were fixed to the detriment of British manufacturers. One way in which to

deal with that would be for the Board of Trade to use its influence to get Government contracts made free and open instead of being the monopoly of the existing ring. At present practically all the support of the Government went to this ring, and it was the duty of the Board of Trade to make such representations as would put an end to the monopoly. He had that day been informed of a case where, under the ring, 42s. per ton had to be paid for rails to South Africa, but the contract had been thrown open, with the result that rails could now be sent for 12s. a ton. It was only reasonable that great dissatisfaction should exist. The taxpayers of the country had made great sacrifices for the war, and they naturally failed to see why America and other countries should reap the reward. The hon. Member might have given them more assurances that something would be done to reduce these enormous prices. It was practically impossible for English traders to compete in South Africa, and he hoped they would protest against this unsatisfactory state of affairs by taking a division.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said the complaint in regard to owner's risk was not confined merely to the trade alluded to by the hon. Member, but it was a grievance and hardship shared by a very large section of the community. Though his hon. friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade might be right in saying he had not the power to interfere, nevertheless he could assure him that this grievance was a widespread one, and required not only the attention of the Board of Trade, but would probably require some drastic legislation. He merely wished to remind his hon. friend that this was a matter which was very much occupying the minds of business men in the country and concerned very much the welfare of trade. It was a matter which was urgent and could not be brushed aside as being one of the ordinary grievances which they were accustomed to hear. He wished to endorse what had been said in the last speaker in regard to the overcrowding of railway carriages, and the present state of things in this respect by some parts of his constituency was a gross scandal. So long as the Board of Trade

Mr. Pirie.

did not bring the pressure which it could bring upon railway companies by not making things too easy in one direction or the other, so long would this scandal continue. It was not only a question of public health and a danger, but it was a matter which affected the business capacity of the nation to a far larger extent than was realised. Some immediate relief ought to be given to a state of things which was entailing immense personal suffering upon a large section of the community.

MR. BONAR LAW said the hon. Member for Aberdeen had brought to his notice a subject which he had gone into a good deal—the question of owner's risk rates. It was impossible for the Department really to deal with it without fresh legislation. They should carefully consider it, and if he saw any possible way of doing anything that could help trade and not be unjust to the railways, he should be very glad to try it. As to the matter of preferential freights to South Africa, if he were speaking only his own opinion and not speaking as representing the Government, he should probably have made the same speech as the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs. The hon. Member must, however, bear in mind that, if the Government intended definitely to do something, it could not explain its intentions beforehand. He must remind the hon. Member that a Committee had been appointed to inquire into this matter under the auspices of the Colonial Secretary. He agreed with the hon. Member in thinking that they could only deal with the matter in one way and that was, as traders, by putting into the scale whatever goods the Government Departments had to send.

MR. DALZIEL: That is all we ask for?

MR. BONAR LAW asked what did that involve? It was not merely a question of the interests which were directly controlled by Government Departments. It certainly would not be effective unless the Agents-General of these Colonies, who were also interested, were induced to come under the same arrangement.

MR. DALZIEL: They are our servants. Why not dismiss them?

MR. BONAR LAW said he did not mean the Agents-General as such—he meant the Colonies they represented. Without the co-operation of these Colonies any action of that kind would probably be ineffective. He did not wish to make it appear that this did not concern the Board of Trade. If such a thing could be prevented it ought to be prevented as far as possible. All the Board of Trade could do was what was done by his right hon. friend who was now President of the Local Government Board—to call the attention of the country and of the Government to the effect which the present state of affairs was having on their industry. The only Department which could really effectively deal with it was the Colonial Office.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): Has a single ton of Government goods ever been sent outside the shipping ring?

MR. BONAR LAW asked if it was easy to alter it, so long as there was nothing else? In his opinion it could only be cured by getting the shipping lines to take reasonable rates, in which case he thought it would be very unjust for the Government or the House to try to interfere with a body which, in the past, had done a very great deal to develop the trade of South Africa. Either they must do that, or they must produce some line in competition which could deal effectively with it and despatch regular sailings to South Africa. The Government were obliged to make contracts that ran for a year, and the only way to make satisfactory arrangements was to get reasonable rates from existing lines or from other competing lines. As regarded overcrowding in railway trains, it was in some cases due to the fact that it was an impossibility for the railway companies to provide sufficient trains for the traffic. The consequence was that the passengers would suffer if the Board insisted that no more than the normal complement should be carried. It was easy to criticise this matter but it was very difficult to deal with it in a practical way.

MR. HARWOOD called attention to the condition of the canal system. He said that trade on canals had practically become a monopoly in the hands of railway companies.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I do not think there is anything connected with canals under this Vote.

MR. HARWOOD said that he should have thought that if railway rates came under this Vote, canals which belonged to railway companies would also be in order.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Certainly canals do not come under this Vote, and it is questionable whether railway rates do.

MR. WHITLEY said he desired to say a word or two about shipping freights to South Africa.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I may point out that these freights are not under the control of the Board of Trade.

MR. DALZIEL submitted that this question had been raised on this Vote in former years, and he thought they were entitled to urge that the representative of the Board of Trade should make representations to the proper quarter.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: This Vote does not seem to me to have any connection with freights to South Africa.

MR. DALZIEL: Surely we are entitled to complain that the Board of Trade has not acted energetically in this matter.

MR. WHITLEY said if they were unable to discuss the action of the President of the Board of Trade, upon his salary, in relation to commercial questions, then the discussion was no use at all.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It is quite in order to discuss the action of the President of the Board of Trade, but I cannot see how the hon. Member connects this question of shipping freights to South Africa with this Vote. That seems to me to be out of order, because the Board of Trade is not responsible.

MR. WHITLEY said he wished to refer to the way in which the President of the Board of Trade could, if he would, cure the complaint which had been so general now for the last two or three years. The right hon. Gentleman was in charge of the commerce of the country, and it was to his Department that the Government turned when they wanted advice in dealing with commercial questions. He considered that the President of the Board of Trade had failed to use the influence he had in the direction of free trade as regards the shipping ring to South Africa. There had been immense Government contracts given out, and they knew that not a single ton of Government orders had been given outside that ring. What they complained of was that the President of the Board of Trade appeared to have taken no notice of this question. He did not say that the President of the Board of Trade should have put on pressure, but, if he had given advice to one of his colleagues, the contracts might have been thrown open, and there would not have been the preferential treatment which had been hindering our manufacturers. Last year there were plenty of offers outside the ring, but the men who gave them could not get the Government orders. The Government had strengthened the ring against its competitors.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 126; Noes, 195. (Division List No. 198.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, Charles P.
Ambrose, Robert
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Bell, Richard

Benn, John Williams
Black, Alexander William
Boland, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bright, Allan Heywood
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, N.E. (York, N.R., Whitby)
Caldwell, James

Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William

Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.
 Edwards, Frank
 Ellice, Capt EC(SAndrew'sB'ghs
 Ellis, John Edward (Notts.)
 Emmott, Alfred
 Evans, Samuel T.(Glamorgan)
 Eve, Harry Trelawney
 Fenwick, Charles
 Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
 Furness, Sir Christopher
 Gladstone, Rt.Hn Herb. John
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Grant, Corrie
 Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
 Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
 Hardie, J.Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
 Harwood, George
 Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
 Helme, Norval Watson
 Henderson, Arthur (Durham
 Higham, John Sharp
 Hobhouse, C. E. H. (Bristol, E.
 Holland, Sir William Henry
 Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Keswick, William
 Lamont, Norman
 Langley, Batty

Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Lewis, John Herbert
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
 Markham, Arthur Basil
 Mooney, John J.
 Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
 Murphy, John
 Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
 Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Brien, P. J. (Tipperary, N.)
 O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 O'Kelly, Jas. (Roscommon, N.
 O'Malley, William
 O'Mara, James
 Partington, Oswald
 Paulton, James Mellor
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Price, Robert John
 Priestley, Arthur
 Rea, Russell
 Redmond, John E. (Waterford
 Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries
 Richards, Thomas
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)

Robson, William Snowdon
 Roe, Sir Thomas
 Runciman, Walter
 Russell, T. W.
 Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Shackleton, David James
 Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Spencer, Rt. Hn C R(Northants
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
 Sullivan, Donal
 Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E
 Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
 Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.
 Tillet, Louis John
 Toulmin, George
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
 White, Luke (York, E.R.
 Whiteley, George (York,W.R.
 Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh.N.
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
 Edward Strachey and Mr.
 Warner.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
 Arrol, Sir William
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
 Bailey, James (Walworth)
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt.Hn. A.J. (Manch'r
 Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W(Leeds
 Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
 Banbury, Sir Frederick George
 Banner, John S. Harwood-
 Bartley, Sir George C. T.
 Bhowaggree, Sir M. M.
 Bignold, Sir Arthur
 Bill, Charles
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
 Boulnois, Edmund
 Brassey, Albert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
 Brotherton, Edward Allen
 Bull, William James
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, Rt.Hn, J.A(Glasgow
 Cautley, Henry Strother
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Chamberlain, Rt HnJA (Worc.
 Chapman, Edward

Coates, Edward Feetham
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Denny, Colonel
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Dimsdale, Rt.Hn. Sir Joseph C
 Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, Sir William Theodore
 Faber, George Denison (York)
 Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
 Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
 Finlay, Sir R.B (Inv'rn'ssB'ghs
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fitzroy, Hn. Edward Algernon
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Flower, Sir Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gardner, Ernest
 Garfit, William
 Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H.
 Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.

Gordon, Hn.J.E(Elgin & Nairn
 Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Greene, Sir E W(B'rySEdm'nds
 Grenfell, William Henry
 Grettton, John
 Guthrie, Walter Murray
 Hain, Edward
 Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'n'd'ry
 Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
 Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
 Heath, Arthur Howard (Hanley
 Heath, Sir J. (Staffords. N.W.)
 Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hoare, Sir Samuel
 Hogg, Lindsay
 Hope, J.F (Sheffield, Brightside
 Houston, Robert Paterson
 Howard, J. (Kent, Faversham
 Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham)
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jameson, Major J. Eustace
 Jessel, Captain Herb. Merton
 Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (Denbigh
 Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn.Col.W
 Kimber, Sir Henry
 Knowles, Sir Lees

Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Sir J. (Monmouth)
 Lawson, John G. (Yorks, N.R.)
 Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
 Llewellyn, Evan Henry
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S)
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas, Col. F. (Lowestoft)
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hn. Alfred
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 McCalmont, Colonel James
 McIver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh W)
 Malcolm, Ian
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Frederick G.
 Milvain, Thomas
 Mitchell, William (Burnley)
 Montagu, G. (Huntingdon)
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
 Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mount, William Arthur
 Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
 Muntz, Sir Philip A.

Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Parker, Sir Gilbert
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
 Reid, James (Greenock)
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Renwick, George
 Ridley, S. Forde
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
 Rothschild, Hon. L. Walter
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Seely, Charles Hilton (Lincoln)
 Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
 Smith, Rt. Hn. J. Parker (Lanarks)

Spear, John Ward
 Spencer, Sir E. (W. Bromwich)
 Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir M. J. M. Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Stroyan, John
 Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Tuff, Charles
 Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
 Tuke, Sir John, Baty
 Turnour, Viscount
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
 Wrightson, Sir Thomas

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Viscount Valentia.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CLASS I.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That a sum, not exceeding £16,565, be
 granted to His Majesty, to complete the
 sum necessary to defray the Charge
 which will come in course of payment
 during the year ending on the 31st day
 of March, 1906, for maintaining certain
 Harbours under the Board of Trade, and
 for Grants in Aid of Harbours."

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow;
 Committee to sit again To-morrow.

WAYS AND MEANS [5TH JUNE].

Resolution reported.

"That, towards making good the
 Supply granted to His Majesty for the
 service of the year ending 31st day of
 March, 1906, the sum of £16,636,200 be
 granted out of the Consolidated Fund of
 the United Kingdom."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the
 Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr.
 Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr.
 Victor Cavendish.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

"To apply a sum out of the Con-
 solidated Fund to the service of the year
 ending on the 31st day of March, 1906,
 presented accordingly, and read the
 first time; to be read a second time
 To-morrow.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That
 this House do now adjourn"—(Sir A.
 Acland-Hood)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at twenty
 minutes before Seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 7th June, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; North Sussex Gas Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Barry Railway Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Sheffield University Bill [Lords]. As amended, to be considered upon Tuesday, 20th June.

Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill (changed from "Shropshire and Worcestershire Electric Power Bill"). As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords]; Great Central Railway (Pension Fund) Bill [Lords]; Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan and Great Central Railway Companies Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Water and Gas Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords] (by Order). Considered; to be read the third time.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he wished to make a personal explanation. It would be within the recollection of the House that he had opposed this Bill, and he now complained that the agent in charge of the Bill had issued what he regarded as a gratuitous and impertinent letter. He opposed the Bill on an important question of administration. The agent called upon him several times, and he tried to see him, but was unsuccessful. He addressed a letter to him only a couple of days ago, in which he included a large number of objectionable phrases, which he thought was an undertaking of very great presumption. Any Member

of the House was entitled to object to a Bill for reasons which he considered adequate, without being subjected to a personal letter, addressed to him and circulated amongst hon. Members of this House. He had only to say that he had since received an apology from the chairman of the company on behalf of the directors in which he entirely dissociated himself from the letter which had been issued by the agent, and under these circumstances he had no further opposition to offer to the Bill.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member was perfectly justified in calling attention to the subject.

Rathmines and Rathgar Extension and Improvement Bill (by Order). As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. Ordered, That, in the case of the South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill, Standing Orders 220 and 246 be suspended, and that the Lords Amendments be now considered.—(Mr. Caldwell.)

Lords Amendments considered accordingly, and agreed to.

PRIVATE BILLS, ETC.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 39, 128, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, also for depositing at the Private Bill Office all Documents relating to any Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.—(The Chairman of Ways and Means.)

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [Lords].

Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade under the General Pier and Harbour Act, 1861, relating to Aberystwyth," presented by Mr. Bonar Law; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 240.]

Millport Piers and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order, under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Millport Piers and Burgh Extension," presented by the Lord-Advocate; read the first time; and, under Section 9 of the Act, ordered to be read a second time upon Tuesday, June 20th, and to be printed. [Bill 241.]

Port Glasgow Improvement Provisional Order Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order, under The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, relating to the Burgh of Port Glasgow," presented by the Lord-Advocate; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 242.]

Inverness Gas and Water Provisional Order Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order, under the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, relating to the Burgh of Inverness," presented by the Lord-Advocate; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 243.]

Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings in the House of Lords on the Second Reading of Gamble's Divorce Bill [Lords], together with the documents deposited in the case, be returned to the House of Lords.—(Mr. Attorney-General.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

UNEMPLOYED RELIEF (WORK) (LONDON).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered April 11th; Mr. Whitmore]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 193.]

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Report of the Committee appointed by the Army Council to consider the question of sales and refunds to Contractors in South Africa, together with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Evidence taken before the Committee appointed by the Army Council to consider the question of sales and refunds to Contractors in South Africa [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVIGATION AND SHIPPING.

Copy presented, of Annual Statement of Navigation and Shipping of the United Kingdom for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3390 to 3397 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Questions to Ministers. Return relative thereto [ordered 6th June; Mr. Henniker Heaton] to be printed. [No. 194.]

NEW WRITS.

For County of Donegal (North Donegal)s. in the room of William O'Doherty, esquire, deceased. City of Cork, James Francis Xavier O'Brien, esquire, deceased.—(Mr. Patrick O'Brien.)

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.**

Dismissal of William Stevens from Royal Military Academy, Woolwich.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether his attention was called to the dismissal of a man from the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, in consequence of the man refusing to accept a 4s. a week reduction in his wages, viz., from 21s. to 17s.; if not, will he cause the case to be looked into with a view to the man being paid his full salary for the week in lieu of the week's notice he was entitled to under the regulations.

(*Answered by Mr. Bromley Davenport.*) The conduct of William Stevens had been unsatisfactory for a long time past. On the last occasion on which he was admonished he was told that, instead of being discharged, he would be given another chance on the lower rate of pay, 17s. a week. He became very insolent, and was dismissed summarily, with pay up to the date of dismissal. The book signed by the servants on engagement contains the rule, "Service is to terminate upon one week's notice, unless in case of gross misconduct."

Delay in Delivery of New Field Guns for Indian Army.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for War what has been the extent of the delay of the delivery of the new field guns for India, which is alluded to in the Memorandum of General Sir Edmond Elles.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The extract from the Memorandum to which the hon. Baronet appears to refer, is as follows: "There has been some delay in the provision of the quick-firing guns for Field Artillery owing to some points regarding the equipment having been still under the consideration of the War Office." This presumably refers to the delay in placing the first orders with the trade, which was due to the question of royalty on design and in the case of the

18-pounder to the trials with a 20 lb. shell as well.

Wages paid by Army Boot Contractors.

MR. CUST (Southwark, Bermondsey): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Report of the Commissioner appointed by the Army Council to inquire into the wages question in the Army boot-manufacturing districts of Northamptonshire has been received; and, if so, what was its effect and what is the result of the inquiry.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) The Commissioner was appointed to inquire into the rate of wage for making Army boots, and to ascertain whether there was at that time a rate of wage accepted as current in the districts referred to. He has now reported that since the commencement of the war in South Africa no such rate has existed, and that consequently the War Department has not been in a position to insist upon the payment of any particular rate of wage in accordance with the Fair Wage Resolution. I am glad to say, however, that his association with the masters and the men has resulted in a settlement of the recent dispute, and an agreement between them which I have every reason to hope will be permanent.

State of Burial Grounds in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Avocate whether he is aware that the County and Chief District Sanitary Inspector for Ross and Cromarty states in his last annual report that the burial grounds of Kirivig, Balinakill, and Little Bernera, Island of Lewis, are still in an unsatisfactory condition and demand an early remedy, many of the coffins at Balinakill being within two feet of the surface; and is he now able to state what action it is proposed to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I am informed that the Lewis District Committee are now asking for the medical officer's certificates to enable them to take the necessary steps to have these burial grounds closed. The Local Government Board are in communication

with the parish council as to the provision of new burial grounds.

Grant for Construction of a Road from Hoy to Rackwick.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware, with reference to the grant from the Congested Districts Board for the construction of a road from Hoy to Rackwick, that the money was originally voted for the shorter and more direct road, and that it now appears that a longer and more expensive road is proposed, and that the grant will be expended on that portion which may be of individual benefit, but which is of no advantage to the Rackwick village; and whether a further grant will be made to complete the road to the Rackwick village.

(Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.) The Congested Districts Board have agreed that the grant originally voted for a road from Hoy to Rackwick by a shorter line may be applied in construction of a road following a different route which is now put forward as of greater public convenience by the county council. The grant will not be paid unless the road is completed.

Inspection of Meat.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has authorised the issue of a circular by the Medical Officer of Health for Tottenham District requesting meat traders to provide forks for the use of intending purchasers to hold and examine meat; and, if so, what section of the Public Health Act, or other statute, empowers such action.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) The circular was not authorised by me. I understand that it was not intended as a request which could be legally enforced, but rather as a suggestion in the general interests of the public health.

The County of Essex.

LIEUT.-COLONEL TUFNELL (Essex, S.E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he has received a petition from the Essex Field Club against the proposed removal of ten parishes from

Essex to Hertfordshire, and what steps, if any, are being taken in the matter; also if he is aware that three parishes removed from Essex to Cambridgeshire for administrative purposes only, in 1894, are now treated as entirely belonging to the latter county, and that all public notices deal with these parishes as being in Cambridgeshire, and the Ordnance maps are now altered to recognise these three parishes as being part of Cambridgeshire.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) I have received the petition referred to. A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order altering the two administrative counties had been read a second time in this House; but the Essex County Council have petitioned against it, and the matter will now come before a Select Committee. Representations to the effect of the statement in the latter part of the Question are contained in the letter from the Essex Field Club; but I understand that whilst the Ordnance maps show the three parishes referred to as being part of the administrative county of Cambridge, they also indicate that there are purposes for which they do not form part of that county.

Compressed Flour.

MR. JOHN HUTTON (Yorkshire, Richmond): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called by the director of the Victualling Department to an invention enabling flour to be compressed at little cost in such a way that it may be stored for many years; and whether he proposes to make any practical use of the invention.

(Answered by Mr. Pretyman.) If the hon. Member's Question refers to a preparation invented by Lord Masham, the attention of the Admiralty has already been drawn to it, and it has been tested in the Victualling Department. The Report is not altogether favourable, and it is not at present intended to make any use of these compressed cakes.

Amount Realised by Sale of Obsolete War Vessels.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what amount has been realised by

the sale of the war vessels which were recently condemned by the Admiralty as obsolete or useless.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretzman.*) The obsolete ships sold during the present financial year have realised about £138,000.

The Meteorological Office.

SIR JOHN TUKE (Edinburgh and St. Andrews' Universities): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state the present constitution of the Meteorological Office; what is its relation to the Royal Society; and how far the recommendations of the Treasury Committee on the Meteorological Grant have been acted on.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) I am about to lay a Treasury Minute upon the Table of the House which deals with the present constitution of the Meteorological Office, and this, I think, will afford my hon. friend the information he desires.

Outbreak of Necrosis.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in addition to the case of necrosis reported in March, two other cases have occurred recently at the same factory.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) Yes, Sir. Two other cases have been reported since from the same factory. One was the case of a woman employed as a boxer of thoroughly d ied matches, who had a tooth extracted and returned to work directly afterwards without informing the firm and obtaining a certificate of fitness as required by the special rules. The attack was a first attack. The other was the case of a man who had phosphorus poisoning some years ago and had been employed since in other work, latterly as a night watchman. In the latter employment, which is one lying outside the scope of the rules, it would be his duty to visit the dipping and other rooms at night, but it is doubtful at present whether the case is one of phosphorus necrosis at all. I am now in possession of reports in all three cases, though the investigation of the third case

is not yet complete; and, in view of the fact that they all occurred at one factory, I have called for a special report on the circumstances in which they arose, and on the working of the special rules in that factory.

Women Undergoing Penal Servitude for Infanticide.

MR. SLACK (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women are now detained in convict prisons either undergoing sentences of penal servitude or commuted capital sentences for infanticide.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) I have called for this information, and when it has been obtained I shall be happy to communicate it to the hon. Member.

Commitment Orders for Non-payment of Poor Rates-- Discretion of Police.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that when a distraint has been ordered for default in paying poor rates, when the police have reported that the defendant has no goods to distraint on and magistrates have made a commitment order, it depends on the discretion and arrangements of the police whether the defendant is imprisoned for the period ordered by the magistrates, or whether he has an additional day or two of detention in the police cell until the police take him to prison; whether he will lay upon the Table a copy of the circular issued some twenty years ago by the Home Office, drawing the attention of magistrates' clerks to this question; whether he will send a copy of that circular, or a similar circular, to magistrates' clerks; and whether he will take some other steps to prevent the inequality which arises in the period of detention, which depends on the distance at which the defendant may reside from the police station.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) The circular to which the hon. Member refers was issued on April 22nd, 1889, and has been more than once re-issued. It is as follows:—"I am directed

by the Secretary of State to acquaint you that his attention has been called to the apparent hardship which occurs when a prisoner sentenced to a term of imprisonment by a Court of summary jurisdiction is not conveyed to prison on the same day on which sentence is passed. The law requires that a sentence of a Court of summary jurisdiction should, unless otherwise ordered, be reckoned from the date of the prisoner's reception into the prison; and if, therefore, the prisoner is detained for a night in the police cells before removal to prison, he is apt to complain that he has to undergo one day's punishment beyond the term intended by the justices. It is probable that in passing sentence this circumstance is duly taken into account by the justices; but in order to put an end to complaints of the character above described, the Secretary of State would suggest for the consideration of the magistrates of your bench that in future, in cases where the prisoner will remain in custody after the sentence is passed, but cannot be taken to the prison the same day, they should insert in the commitment an express order that the sentence is to be reckoned from the date on which it was passed." This circular applies to cases where prisoners are committed direct from the Court to prison; but I understand that the case which the hon. Member has in mind is one where the defendant was committed in default of distress, and where, therefore, he was not in custody when the commitment was issued. In such a case it appears to me to be the duty of the police, on arresting the defendant, to convey him to prison with promptitude, and I think they ought, so far as they safely can, to avoid arresting a prisoner at an hour when it would be necessary to detain him for a night in the police cells. If any cases where the police are alleged to have acted otherwise are brought to my notice, I will make inquiry and consider whether the issue of a circular to the police or any other action is called for.

Caning of Children in Elementary School at Preston for Non payment of Fees.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether his attention has been drawn to an allegation, made at a

meeting of the town council of Preston on May 25th by several members of the council, that children were caned in the elementary school of that borough for not bringing their school fees; whether any inquiry is being made into the truth of the statement; whether the Board of Education will call for a report on the matter from the education committee of the Preston Town Council, and will, if necessary, express its disapproval of such a method of collecting school fees; and whether the payment of fees in the elementary schools is sanctioned by the Board of Education.

(Answered by Sir William Anson.) I have not seen the statement referred to, nor has any member of the town council of Preston drawn the attention of the Board to the alleged cases of caning. I will, however, make inquiries of the local education authority.

Postal Officials and Trade Societies.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the Controller of Telegraphs, Dublin, in submitting a complaint about delay on Press messages to the Dublin secretary, stated that an extract from a Dublin evening paper, which accompanied the complaint, was taken from a service organ and was written by officers disloyal to the Department; and whether, in view of the official records of the officers referred to, he will take steps to prevent charges of this kind being made against those who identify themselves with associations having as their object the improvement of the prospects of Post Office officials.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) The report from the Controller of Telegraphs at Dublin, to which the hon. Member refers, has not been brought before me; but if the words of which he complains were used by the Controller of those responsible for certain articles recently published in a journal which announces itself to be the "Official Organ of the Association of Irish Post Office Clerks," I consider he was completely justified in using them.

Retired Postal and Telegraph Officials in Receipt of Pensions.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will order a Return to be issued stating the number of postal and telegraph officials in Great Britain and Ireland respectively in receipt at the present time of a pension from the Department, and the number of such who have been in receipt of same for the past ten years; also the number of officials in Great Britain and Ireland respectively who have died in the service with upwards of five years service.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) The number of Post Office pensioners at the present time is as follows:—Great Britain, 6,369; Ireland, 471. Of this number 1,762 in Great Britain and 163 in Ireland have drawn their pensions for the past ten years. The number of officials in Great Britain and Ireland who died in the year ending December 31st, 1904, after as much as five years service, was 179 and 22 respectively.

Telegraphic Delays at Dublin.

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been drawn to complaints about telegraphic delay recently made in Dublin; can he say what is the cause of the delay; is he aware that a number of officers who had hitherto been solely employed in the instrument room are doing duty daily in the sorting office, and that, though the instrument room is meagrely staffed, there are several fully qualified male and female learners awaiting appointment in Dublin for upwards of two years; and, if so, what steps will be taken in the matter.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) My attention has not been drawn to complaints about delay to telegrams in Dublin. I am aware that owing to the falling off in telegraph business certain officers have been transferred from telegraph to postal work to prevent the instrument room being overstaffed.

Appeal to Postmaster-General of Mr. Fox, of Portadown.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has yet received the appeal of Mr. Fox, of Portadown,

against the award of the local officials; whether he can state the date upon which he forwarded the appeal and the date upon which the Postmaster-General received it; and whether it is usual to ask an officer to perform punishment against which he appealed some months before the Postmaster-General receives the papers from the local authorities.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) Mr. Fox's appeal of February 28th was transmitted to the secretary, after inquiry in Ireland, on April 6th. The matter, though trivial, was complicated, and further inquiry was found necessary. The appeal was submitted to me for final decision on the 3rd inst., and I came to the conclusion that the two hours extra work which Mr. Fox was required to perform was not an excessive punishment for his carelessness. The other matters referred to by the hon. Member are dealt with in my reply to his Question of the 8th ultimo.†

Temporary Relief of Telegraph and Telephone Operators.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the rule in the postal telegraph, and telephone departments that no operator can leave the instruments of which he has charge without being substituted by a colleague, is still in force; whether he is aware that an order has been issued at Bristol that no male or female operator can be permitted relief from circuit duties for any purpose in excess of five minutes per day, otherwise the time has to be made good and the matter is recorded against the officer; whether the Postmaster-General will state if such a system is in existence in any other section of the Civil Service; and whether he will state if the rule was issued with his sanction.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) There is no rule prescribing what steps should be taken to provide for the duty of a telegraphist during short occasional absences, any necessary arrangements being made at the discretion of the controlling officers. It was necessary to exercise some check on occasional absences at Bristol, where

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlv., 1109.

there had been some laxity; but regulations recently issued with this object were perhaps somewhat stringent, and they are being modified.

Mauritius-Reunion Cable.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the announcement by the French Under-Secretary of State for Posts, that an agreement has been concluded directly between His Majesty's Government and France for the laying of a cable between Mauritius and Réunion to connect with the Réunion-Madagascar cable for which funds were voted in France more than a year ago; whether any information can be given as to the nature and details of the agreement; whether the Cables Committee recommended by Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Committee has been organised; and, if so, whether the present international agreement is a first result of the work of any such Committee.

(Answered by Earl Percy.) Negotiations have been in progress between the British and French Post Offices with regard to the laying of a cable between Mauritius and Réunion, but no definite agreement has been arrived at. The Cables Committee recommended by Lord Balfour of Burleigh's Committee was to be an extension of the Inter-Departmental Committee known as the Cables (Landing Rights) Committee, which has been established for some years. The question of the proposed Mauritius-Réunion cable has been under the consideration of the latter Committee.

Suggested Extension of House of Commons Library.

MR. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether the room to the north of the present library rooms is a portion of the accommodation originally set apart for Members of the House of Commons; whether the books therein form part of the library of the House of Commons; and whether arrangements to restore the use of the room to its original purpose can now be made.

(Answered by Lord Balcarras.) It is believed that the facts are as stated; but the First Commissioner is unable at present to say whether the suggestion of the hon. Member is practicable or not.

Value of Securities held by the National Debt Commissioners.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether in the Return relating to the National Debt (Cd. 2516, pp. 7 and 9) the value of the Suez Canal shares held by the Government is not estimated at the market value on a given day; and, if so, will he explain why is the method not applied to the securities held by the National Debt Commissioners on account of the savings banks.

(Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.) It has been the practice to show the estimated value of the Suez Canal shares at current market price in the Annual Returns of the National Debt, and I think the computation is of some interest. The reasons which led the Select Committee on Savings Banks to recommend the discontinuance of the similar practice in the case of the savings banks funds will be found stated in their Report.

Deaths from Plague in India.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that in India in 1901 the total deaths from plague were returned at 273,679, in 1902 the number rose to 577,427, in 1903 it reached 851,263, and in 1904 it was 1,022,299; and whether he can state what steps are being taken by the Government for the prevention of the spread of plague.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) I am aware of the lamentable mortality from plague indicated by the figures quoted by the hon. Member. The Government is endeavouring, while necessarily respecting the feelings and the prejudices of the people, to assist them by every possible means to help themselves, and to bring within their reach all material means to that end. It is promoting, in the matter of prevention, the more efficient sanitation and

cleansing of towns and villages, the destruction of rats and mice, and the means of inoculation. It is enlisting and organising unofficial help by the formation of Health and Charitable Committees, and has defined the duties of municipalities and other similar bodies in respect of giving intelligence, of providing hospitals and free sites for camps, and of succouring homeless wayfarers. On the occasion of any outbreak of plague, it encourages and, through its medical and administrative officers, assists the residents to disinfect their houses and property, to isolate the sick, to destroy infected materials, and to evacuate plague-stricken dwellings and sites. It gives compensation for loss of property to the poor, and assists them to rehouse themselves. It maintains laboratories for the preparation of fluid for inoculation, and for the systematic study and diagnosis of the disease; and it has placed at the disposal of an Advisory Committee of the highest authority in this country a grant of money for meeting the expenses of a scientific expedition, which is now carrying out further plague investigations in India.

Military Expenditure in India.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Secretary of State for India at what stations it is proposed to expend the ten lakhs on extra land for troops, additional to the twenty-two lakhs for barracks and the seven lakhs for hutting taken in the Budget in connection with Lord Kitchener's redistribution scheme.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) The Government of India have recently reported that no details of this expenditure can be furnished, as the programme of redistribution has not yet been finally determined on.

The Indian Viceroy's Council.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether it is proposed to make any alteration in the constitution of the Viceroy's Council, or to modify in any respect the powers of the Commander-in-Chief or the Military Member of Council.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) The question of the powers and responsibilities of the Commander-in-Chief in India and of the member of the Governor-General's Council in charge of the Military Department has recently been under the consideration of His Majesty's Government. I am unable to make any statement on the subject at present, but I propose to lay Papers upon the Table very shortly.

Peat Bogs, Beet Culture, and Transit in Ireland.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state whether any further Report has been received by the Department of Agriculture respecting experiments to utilise the peat bogs of Ireland, or with respect to beet culture in Ireland; or whether the Department has received any further powers with regard to transit since the House passed its Resolution.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The Department have not yet received any further Reports, either on the utilisation of peat bogs in Ireland or on the cultivation of the beet. Their experiment as regards the manufacture of peat fuel is being continued. The Answer to the last part of the Question is also in the negative.

Condition of Salmon Weir and Sluices on Belclare River, Westport.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the condition of the salmon weir and sluices on the Belclare River, near Westport, which runs through lands now the property of the Congested Districts Board; whether he is aware that owing to the sluices being kept down and the salmon gap closed the neighbouring lands are flooded for the greater part of the year; and whether he will see that the Board will set them right.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The Board have referred this matter to the Department of Agriculture, and the latter will have an inspection made as soon as possible.

Qualifications of Irish Resident Magistrates.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what legal qualifications, if any, are required for the position of resident magistrate in Ireland; and whether he can state how many resident magistrates have been appointed who were barristers or solicitors, and how many who were formerly in the Army or Navy or political service.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) No legal qualifications are prescribed by statute or otherwise, but the Lord-Lieutenant selects for these appointments persons of whose competency he is satisfied. Of the sixty-six resident magistrates now serving, twenty-two were barristers or solicitors, eleven were in the Army or Navy, and twenty-five were constabulary officers.

Warden Estate, Sneem.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that seven tenants on the Warden Estate at Sneem, who were scheduled as evicted tenants under the sale negotiations, have been processed for interest by the landlord, although they have not yet been reinstated; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Estates Commissioners have no knowledge whether the fact is as stated in the Question; but, if it be so, the matter is not one in which any steps on the part of the Executive are called for.

Promotion of Officials in the Natural History Museum, Dublin.

MR. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what are the regulations under which promotion takes place among the officials of the Natural History Museum, Dublin; is he aware that some officials are compelled to pass a further examination before obtaining the rank of museum assistant whilst others are promoted without such further examination; and, in view of the fact that an official of English birth has lately been promoted to the post of museum assistant without

having had to undergo the further examination, he will explain why an Irish official, an honours graduate in natural science of the Royal University of Ireland, who temporarily occupied the position of museum assistant during one year, and has since been employed as technical assistant in the Natural History Museum, is required, although nominated for the post of museum assistant by the keeper of the Natural History Museum, to pass a further examination in subjects quite foreign to the work of the museum.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Department are in correspondence with the Treasury and the Civil Service Commissioners on the question of the mode of appointment of assistants in the Dublin Museum of Science and Art.

Fines imposed at Coolmagort Petty Sessions — Overruling of Magistrates' Decision.

MR. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state on what grounds the fishery branch of the Department of Agriculture differed from the decision of the local magistrates at Coolmagort Petty Sessions in the matter of the reduction of fines imposed on John O'Donoghue and J. Sullivan; and can he say why the unanimous decision of the local magistrates has been overruled.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I must, in accordance with the invariable practice, decline to give the information asked for.

Berridge Estate, Connemara.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the Congested Districts Board have declined to purchase the Berridge Estate, Connemara, on the ground that there was no agricultural land available for the enlargement of the small uneconomic holdings on this estate, he will advise the Board to reconsider the question of purchase, on the ground that the mountain lands adjoining, or in close proximity to those holdings, if given to the tenants would considerably enhance the value of those

holdings; and whether, in view of the character of the uneconomic holdings on this estate, the Estates Commissioners would be advised not to sanction a sale direct to the tenants, unless they were satisfied that the holdings could be enlarged and rendered economic.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The Board have fully considered the question of purchasing this estate, but have decided not to do so for the reason stated in the Question. The mountain land referred to is already occupied by the tenants for grazing purposes. The estate has not come before the Estates Commissioners, and they are therefore unable to express an opinion upon the point raised in the concluding part of the Question.

O'Donel Estate, Newport, County Mayo.

DR. AMBROSE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in the sale to the Congested Districts Board of the O'Donel Estate at Newport, county Mayo.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The Board have, in pursuance of Sections 7 and 77 of the Act, issued a request to the Land Judge for particulars and documents in order that an inspection of the estate may be made. The particulars and documents have not yet been received by the Board.

Marine Works in County Mayo.

DR. AMBROSE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in the carrying out of the marine works in county Mayo, for which a grant has been made under the Marine Works (Ireland) Act; and if he can say whether those works will be commenced in the near future.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) This matter is still under consideration, and, as I informed the hon. Member on Thursday last, I am not yet in a position to make a definite statement on the subject.

Annual Report on Army Recruiting—Causes of Rejection.

MR. H. J. WILSON: To ask the Secretary of State for War why the Annual Report on Recruiting does not now specify, as in previous years, the causes of rejection; and will he state in what publication the causes of rejection can be found.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.) The detailed causes of rejection will be found in the Army Medical Annual Report. The Report for 1903 was presented to the House last month, and copies will shortly be in the hands of Members.

Boers Detained as Prisoners of War in Ceylon.

DR. MACNAMARA: To ask the Secretary of State for War how many Boers are still detained as prisoners of war in Ceylon; what is the reason of their detention so long after the conclusion of peace, and for how long is it intended that this detention shall continue; and whether his attention has been directed to an action brought against H. Engelbrecht, a Boer prisoner of war, in the course of which action the Judge said that the allowance made by the Government to the prisoner was hardly sufficient to enable him to pay for food, clothing, shelter, and washing; and whether he intends to take any action in view of this statement.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.)

1. Engelbrecht is the only one out of the number still remaining in Ceylon. 2. He was released in September, 1903, with four others, these being the only recalcitrant prisoners of war remaining at that time, and he was paid an allowance of one rupee a day, being required to make his own arrangements for his maintenance. He was informed that he would return to South Africa only if he made the necessary declaration of allegiance, but that he would at any time be given a passage to any other country. 3. I have not seen an account of the action to which reference is made, but I do not suppose that the allowance is designed to maintain an able-bodied man in idleness.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Alleged Improper Arrest of a Militia Private.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that H. Cook, late a private in the Bedfordshire Militia, and now in private employment in Essex, was arrested by a policeman at Abridge on Monday, May 29th, and conveyed as a prisoner to Epping and detained there in custody until May 31st, when he was discharged without any further explanation being given; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any, and, if any, what, action in the matter.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. ERMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): Nothing is known at the War Office of the matter mentioned in the Question. I think this is a case which can be left to the discretion of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the Eastern Command, and I do not, therefore, propose to take any action in the matter.

The Police and the Militia.

SIR CARNE RASCH (Essex, Chelmsford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to a case at the Liverpool Assizes, where a police constable described a prisoner as a lazy, idle man, only good for the Militia, and to the circular of the Superintendent Hertford Police, advising the publicans to refuse to serve Militiamen; and whether he will take steps to prevent such action on the part of the authorities, with a view to encouraging recruiting. As this Question has been altered at the Table, may I say I am of opinion that such action does not encourage recruiting.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: As regards the first case a newspaper extract was forwarded to the War Office, and has been referred to the General Officer Commanding concerned. As regards the second case, I will read out to the House the circular in question, which runs as follows: "The Hertfordshire Militia assemble at Hertford on Monday, May 15th, and should be in the barracks by

10 a.m. I shall be glad if you will show kindness to these men by not allowing them to enter your premises when they should be at the barracks. By doing this you will greatly assist the police and military authorities, and keep the men out of trouble." This circular was evidently kindly meant, and not intended in any way to cast reflection on the Militia.

Militia Training.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that when recruiting was in progress for the Cornwall and Devon Miners Royal Garrison Artillery Militia and for the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers Militia, the recruits were given to understand that the period of training would be for forty-one and fifty-six days respectively, and that it was only after the statutory notice had been issued, and the recruits had been enlisted for the full period, that orders were given for curtailment of the training to twenty-seven and forty-one days respectively; and whether, in the interests of recruiting, he will take steps to prevent such alterations of the arrangements in future.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: As regards the Cornwall and Devon Miners R.G.A., Militia, it must be remembered that garrison artillery units train, in accordance with Militia Regulations, every third year for forty-one days, and in other years for twenty-seven days only. This unit was exceptionally allowed to train for forty-one days in 1903 and 1904, but in view of other and more pressing requirements no provision was made for such extended training during 1905. As regards the Royal Monmouth R.E. Militia, the period of training for the Field Company during the present year will be fifty-five days, and for the Fortress Company forty-eight days.

Military Works Loan Bill.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when will the Military Works Loan Bill be introduced.

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: The sums already available under the Military

Works Acts are sufficient to meet all the estimated expenditure, and there is no present intention of asking for further borrowing powers for works expenditure after the total sum authorised is exhausted. No Military Works Bill will therefore be required this year.

MR. BUCHANAN: Will it not be necessary to introduce a Bill to enable any money to be spent after this year?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: No Sir.

Education of Indian Immigrants in Natal.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will consider the advisability of making representations to the Government of Natal with a view to the provision of adequate facilities for the industrial and primary education of Indian immigrants in that colony; and whether he has any official information bearing upon the statements in the latest official Report by Mr. P. A. Barnett, the Superintendent of Education, as to the effect of the present neglect in this respect in confining the Indian population to petty industries, in discouraging it from acquiring arts and crafts, and in increasing crime.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. LYTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): I am not in a position, in the circumstances, to make such representations to the Government of a self-governing Colony on a matter within its competence. I notice that the amount set down in the Natal Estimates for Indian education for 1904-5 is £5,588 as compared with £4,140 for the previous year. The subject is one for the consideration of the local Government and for discussion in the local Parliament.

The Transvaal Loan.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies who acted on behalf of the Transvaal Government in the negotiations which led to the understanding that the Transvaal would issue a loan for payment to Great Britain, which loan

the mineowners were prepared to underwrite when issued.

MR. LYTTELTON: Lord Milner was cognisant of the course of the proceedings. I would point out to the hon. Member that the issue of a loan was a matter to be finally determined by the Legislative Council, and at the time when Mr. Chamberlain was in the Transvaal that Council still consisted of official members only, so that his object was to secure the approval of a fully representative meeting for the principle of a contribution to be subsequently given effect to by a Legislative Council by the passing of the usual form of a Loan Ordinance.

MR. AINSWORTH: Was there any authority in South Africa representing the Government of South Africa which undertook to issue the loan?

MR. LYTTELTON: No. Lord Milner was cognisant of the course of those negotiations, but was not present at them.

Importation of Canadian Cattle.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has observed that the hon. Sydney Fisher, Minister of Agriculture in the Dominion Cabinet, has declared that the continuance by Great Britain of an embargo on Canadian cattle could only be described in his opinion as an unfriendly act; and also that there is much irritation on the part of Canadian agriculturists respecting the matter; and whether, in view of the protest recently communicated by the High Commissioner of Canada, he will advise the Imperial Government to make such concessions as will allay the existing irritation and conduce to a better understanding with the Canadian Government on this question.

MR. LYTTELTON: I have seen such a statement as the hon. Member refers to attributed to the Canadian Minister of Agriculture, but I am not aware that the report is accurate. This question has attracted, for some years past, considerable attention in Canada, and although

no such protest as the hon. Member mentions has reached me through the High Commissioner, the subject is one which has been separately considered by no less than five successive Presidents of the Board of Agriculture as well as by my predecessors and myself, with the most earnest desire to meet the wishes of those interested in the matter in Canada. My right hon. friend the President of the Board of Agriculture feels it impossible to depart from a policy deliberately arrived at and to incur the risk which undoubtedly attaches to the importation of live cattle from a country which, though it may be at a given moment free from cattle disease itself, has an open frontier of over 4,000 miles in extent. I have no doubt that the Canadian Government and public fully appreciate the gravity of the risks involved, and the facilities given for the importation of fat cattle, subject to slaughter on arrival, appear to me to be calculated to reduce to the utmost any hardship which the necessary restrictions on importation impose on the industry.

MR. BUCHANAN: Has there been any disease in Canada since this Bill passed into law?

[No Answer was returned.]

Education of Children on Indian Tea Plantations.

MR. SCHWANN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will ascertain when the further reports from the Government of Bengal and the Chief Commissioner of Assam respecting the education of children on plantations, are likely to be submitted; and will he cause statistics to be furnished as to the number of children of a school-going age in Indian plantations, such as the Secretary of State for the Colonies has requested to be supplied annually in Ceylon by the Director of Public Instruction with regard to Indian coolie children on estates in that colony.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I have already asked the Government of India to expedite the further reports promised on this subject. A

copy of the hon. Member's Question will be transmitted to that Government, in order that they may consider whether the statistics asked for can be obtained.

Mountain Guns for Afghanistan.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury): On behalf of the Junior Member for Oldham (Mr. CHURCHILL), I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the claim of Mr. W. D. Houghton, of the Sankey Wire Mills, Warrington, in respect of consignments of forgings for mountain guns, ordered by the Amir of Afghanistan, and manufactured by Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth, and Company, and which have been detained by the Indian Government, although the Indian Government have allowed a German firm to deliver to the Amir both mountain guns and field pieces; and what were the reasons which induced the Government of India to accord preference to German manufacturers to the detriment of a Lancashire firm.

MR. BRODRICK: I have been in correspondence with the representatives of Mr. Houghton, and explained to them the position of the Government of India in the matter of his claims. Owing to a promise to permit the importation of certain German guns having been given to the predecessor of the present Amir by the Government of India in May, 1901, certain Krupp guns were allowed to pass to Kabul in the year 1902; but none have been since transmitted.

Landlords' Income-Tax Allowances.

MR. SCHWANN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the reduction of one-sixth, usually allowed to landlords from the income charges under Schedule A for repairs, will in future be reduced to a smaller percentage in cases where, by lease or yearly agreement, tenants undertake to keep the decorations and internal fittings in good condition; and whether this new scale will be effectively put in force throughout the whole country, and on all classes of property.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): No, Sir. The

abatement is, with some not material exceptions in certain special circumstances, allowed in full on the amount at which house property is assessed. But, in making the assessment, regard is had to the tenant's obligations in respect of repairs, and a proportionate addition is made to the reserved rental in order to arrive at the rack-rental as defined in the Income-Tax Acts. This is not a new principle. It is prescribed in the Acts, and is, I believe, always acted upon by the Local Commissioners of Income-Tax by whom the assessments are made.

Interest on Loans under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what is the reason for increasing the rate of interest under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts from $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to 4 per cent.; and whether the Treasury would consider the necessity for changing same, and bringing it into agreement with the financial arrangements of The Land Act, 1903.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): These loans are made out of the Local Loans Fund, and cannot, therefore, be made subject to the financial arrangements under the Land Act. The rates of interest on loans out of the Local Loans Fund had to be increased in view of the less favourable terms on which money can be raised to supply the requirements of the fund.

Irish Asylum Loans—Rate of Interest.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether representations have been made by the Kerry County Council and other similar bodies as to the rates of interest charged by the Board of Works on asylum loans in Ireland; and whether he can take any steps to have these rates reasonably reduced.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: In the last months of 1903 four resolutions on the subject referred to by the hon. Member were received by the Board of Works. Loans for lunatic asylums are advanced out of the Local Loans Fund,

and are, therefore, subject to the conditions as regards the rates of interest which I have just described to the hon. Member.

Cattle Mutilation at Hylton.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received information that a calf, the property of one Hutchinson, of Highford Farm, Hylton, near Sunderland, had been discovered with its hind legs cut off and otherwise mutilated; and whether this matter will be fully investigated, and if up to the present any motive has been assigned.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I find on inquiry that there has been no such case of mutilation of a calf as the Question suggests. A complaint was received by the police that a calf had been stolen, and on investigation the slaughtered and dressed carcass was found. One hind quarter had been removed and hidden. The motive was clearly robbery. The police have not yet succeeded in tracing the thieves.

Ilkeston Domestic Broil.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the conviction of an Ilkley labourer at Otley, on May 19th, 1905, who pleaded guilty to branding his wife's face with a toasting fork, and otherwise cruelly ill-treating her; and will he say whether this person was proceeded against in the ordinary way, and what was the penalty inflicted.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I find on inquiry that the defendant in question was convicted of striking his wife on the shoulder and was fined 2s. 6d. and costs. There was never any suggestion that he had branded her; but it appears that he suggested in cross-examination that she had "brayed" him on the face with a toasting fork.

Chichester Election—Alleged Boycotting.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for

the Home Department whether he is aware that the Rev. W. J. Hermann Newman, of Eastdean Vicarage, Chichester, has by letter discontinued all business dealings with Mr. Pennicott, a baker, and also a churchwarden in Chichester, because Mr. Pennicott nominated and otherwise supported Mr. Allen, the unsuccessful candidate in the recent Parliamentary election; whether he is aware that action of this sort is, in Ireland, described as boycotting and intimidation, and is dealt with by special law; and will he say whether he intends to take any, and, if any, what, action in the matter.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I have seen a report of this matter in a newspaper cutting which the hon. Member has kindly sent me. If the account there given is accurate, an individual clergyman, without assigning any reason, withdrew his custom from an individual tradesman. It is clear that in such circumstances I have no power to take any action.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that in Ireland cases of this kind would lead to prosecution? Why the difference between the two countries?

[No Answer was returned.]

Leek Post Office.

MR. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General when it is proposed to commence the erection of the new post office at Leek.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Money for building the new post office at Leek has been provided in the Estimates for the current year, and a beginning will, it is hoped, be made as soon as the legal arrangements for the exchange of ground with the corporation have been completed.

Canadian Exports to the United Kingdom.

MR. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he can state the exports of eggs, butter, creamery, hogs, cattle,

and oats from Canada to the United Kingdom for the first five months of this year as compared with the exports of the same period of last year.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): If the hon. Member will put down a Question without a star, the information, so far as it is available, shall be given in the form of a table.

Motor-Cars in Richmond Park.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the hon. Member for the Chorley Division, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if his attention has been called to the fact that motors are constantly driven in Richmond Park at speeds far exceeding that permitted by orders; and if he will, in the public interest, insist that the orders are strictly carried out.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. The First Commissioner is determined to enforce the regulations as to speed, and several persons have been summoned with that object. He is unable to make any further statement pending judgment in the case which has been stated for the High Court and which is to be heard on Thursday of this week.

Selection of Pupils for Enrolment in Supplementary Courses in Scotland.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether the Scotch Education Department will consider the expediency of directing His Majesty's Inspectors of Schools to hold annually in every State-aided school an individual examination of all children on the school register of twelve years of age, with reference to their fitness to enter upon the supplementary course of instruction.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): The Scotch Education Department has no reason to be dissatisfied with the working of the present method of selecting pupils for enrolment in supplementary courses, and does not, as at present advised,

propose to institute such an examination as that suggested by the hon. Member.

Embezzlement Cases in Ireland.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how many prosecutions took place in Ireland during the past twelve months for embezzlement, and how many of these cases were in Ulster.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): In 1904, sixty-nine persons were prosecuted; and, of these, fourteen were prosecuted in Ulster.

Blennerhassett Estate, County Kerry.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application from Mr. Maurice Flaherty, an evicted tenant on the Blennerhassett Estate, county Kerry; and, if so, what steps they have taken towards effecting the reinstatement of the applicant.

MR. WALTER LONG: The application has been received, but no opportunity for dealing with it has arisen, as the estate has not yet come before the Commissioners.

MR. MURPHY: Do the Government, then, intend to do nothing in these cases?

MR. WALTER LONG: I have no power to act if no application is made.

Morrogh Bernard Estate, County Kerry.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any application has been lodged with the Estates Commissioners for the sale of the Morrogh Bernard Estate, county Kerry; and if any steps are being taken by them to deal with the cases of evicted tenants on this estate who have sent applications to the Commissioners.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Answer to both inquiries is in the negative.

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Irish Local Government Board Auditors— Mr. Browne's Qualifications.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the name of the chartered or incorporated society from which Mr. Browne, Local Government Board auditor, holds a certificate.

MR. WALTER LONG: Mr. Browne holds a senior certificate from the London Chamber of Commerce, and also a first class certificate from the Society of Arts.

MR. MACVEAGH: The other day the right hon. Gentleman said Mr. Browne held the certificate of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. Now it appears he does not.

MR. WALTER LONG: I did not say that.

Limavady Magisterial Bench.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of justices of the peace on the Limavady Bench (county Derry), and the number of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Catholics respectively.

MR. WALTER LONG: The number is eleven, of whom six are believed to be members of the Irish Church, three to be Presbyterians, one a Roman Catholic, and one a Methodist.

Outrages (Ireland) Return.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the Parliamentary Return issued a fortnight ago under the title Outrages (Ireland), took cognisance of outrages only, or whether it included all other offences of an indictable character.

MR. WALTER LONG: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Return itself, which very explicitly answers his Question.

Irish Local Government Account Forms.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant

of Ireland whether he can state if, after the passing of the Local Government Act, 1898, Mr. Ellis, an auditor under the Local Government Board, devised and copyrighted certain account forms, including a ledger to last for five years; whether he made arrangements with Dollard and Co., printers, to produce same for sale to the public bodies whose accounts he was auditing; whether Mr. Ellis has now placed a contract with Helys, Limited, printers, for the production, in connection with The Public Bodies Order, 1904, of copyrighted books to be sold to public bodies under the control of the Department of which Mr. Ellis is an official; and, if so, whether he can state the profits which accrued to Mr. Ellis from the copyrighting of the ledger and other works.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Local Government Board have no information as to the alleged arrangements between Mr. Ellis and the publishing firms referred to.

MR. MACVEAGH: Then does the right hon. Gentleman decline to inquire?

MR. WALTER LONG: I see no object in holding an inquiry.

MR. MACVEAGH: It is a public fraud.

Constable Adams, of Wicklow.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Wicklow, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland (1) how many constables of longer service than Constable Adams and without any unfavourable records are there on the promotion list in the county of Wicklow; (2) whether any special qualification exists in Adams' case to entitle him to promotion before his senior comrades; (3) whether it is contrary to the regulations for this constable's wife and family to occupy married quarters; (4) whether he has any unfavourable records; and, if so, how many, and (5) was he ever cautioned because of infringement of the rules of the service.

MR. WALTER LONG: The answer to the third inquiry is in the negative.

The remaining inquiries deal with matters of discipline, as to which I must decline to give any information.

Sir Douglas Brooke's Speech.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to a statement recently made in a speech by Sir Douglas Brooke, Baronet, a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant of the county of Fermanagh, at Maguire's bridge in that county, while addressing an audience of Orangemen, that at the time of Mr. Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill he had given out rifles to his Protestant tenantry and had taught some of those Protestants how to shoot those rifles straight, and that there were a good many of those rifles still in the country, any search will be instituted for concealed arms among the tenantry of Sir Douglas Brooke, similar to the search for arms instituted by the direction of the Government among the tenants of the De Freyne Estate; and, if not, whether he can explain the different methods of administration with respect to the concealment of arms in Orange districts and in Nationalist districts; and whether the Lord Chancellor's attention has again been called to Sir Douglas Brooke's speech, with a view to his removal from the commission of the peace.

MR. WALTER LONG: As I stated on May 29th,† I must decline to make any announcement as to the intention to search for unlicensed firearms. No question of religion arises in connection with this matter. Searches are made whenever and wherever there is reason to believe that arms are illegally kept. As regards the concluding inquiry of the Question, the Lord Chancellor's attention has already been called to the speech, but I will again bring the matter before him.

Faha National School—Case of Miss O'Leary.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Miss E. O'Leary, who was employed as

† See page 95.

workmistress at Faha National School, district 57, circuit 22, county Kerry, for over forty years, was recently compelled to retire without any pension or allowance of any kind whatever; and whether the Commissioners of Education in Ireland have any means at their disposal to give some assistance to Miss O'Leary in view of her length of service.

MR. WALTER LONG: Miss O'Leary's services were discontinued because she had reached the limit of age. Workmistresses are not entitled to pension or retiring gratuity.

Killeentierna Evicted Tenant.

MR. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application from an evicted tenant, named John Reidy, of Killeentierna, county Kerry; and, if so, what steps they have taken to secure his reinstatement.

MR. WALTER LONG: The application has been received, but no opportunity for dealing with it has arisen, as the estate concerned has not yet come before the Commissioners.

Crime in Ireland—Government Analysis.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state in his analysis of outrages in Ireland, issued on May 30th, why he excluded Dublin from Leinster and Belfast from Ulster, whilst including Galway in Connaught and Cork in Munster; whether, in his analysis of June 1st, Dublin was excluded from his population figures, whilst Belfast was included; and whether he can state, with reference to the analysis issued on May 30th, what specific offences mentioned in the recent Parliamentary Return were classified by him as serious crimes, and what offences as not serious.

MR. WALTER LONG: As I stated on June 1st,† the Return does not include the Dublin Metropolitan Police district. The Questions already put to me instituted a comparison between Ulster

and the other provinces; and as the figures for Leinster did not include Dublin, so the figures for Belfast were excluded from Ulster. Otherwise the comparison between the provinces would have been misleading. Cork and Galway are small towns when compared with Dublin and Belfast. The population of Cork is only 7 per cent. of Munster, and that of Galway but $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of Connaught; while Dublin represents 34 per cent. of Leinster, and Belfast 22 per cent. of Ulster. The proportion of crimes to population in Cork and Galway is not much in excess of an ordinary rural district, and consequently the inclusion or exclusion of those towns would not appreciably affect the matter. In my statement of June 1st, the population of Belfast was included because the Question to which I was replying required its inclusion. The population of Dublin was omitted because the crime for Dublin was omitted from the Return. The reply to the concluding inquiry is that all the offences mentioned in the Return are regarded as serious crimes.

Case of Constable Cryon.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now say what is the result of the investigation of the Inspector-General, Royal Irish Constabulary, into the charges made against Constable Cryon, Mountmellick, and for which he has been mulcted in damages in the High Courts.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Inspector-General has deferred his decision in the case of Constable Cryon until the charge of assault against Constable Masterson in connection with the same matter has been heard at the Summer Assizes.

Threatening Letters in Ulster.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state on what basis he formed the calculation that, with regard to offences against the public peace, omitting threatening letters and notices, only 23 per cent. of those enumerated in the recent Parliamentary Return occurred in Ulster.

† See page 448.

MR. WALTER LONG: The total number of offences against the public peace in Ireland, omitting threatening letters and notices, is fifty-seven. The similar number for Ulster is thirteen. Thirteen is 22·8 per cent. of 57.

MR. MACVEAGH: The right hon. Gentleman is wrong. The Question was not about Belfast, but about Ulster.

Lloyd Apjohn Estate, County Limerick.

MR. DELANY: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Limerick, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to negotiations for sale and purchase as between the present owners of the Lloyd Apjohn Estate around Pallas Grean, county Limerick, and the tenants; is he aware that papers containing prices and particulars of purchase were filled up some time ago and signed by the tenants, and that subsequently some of the tenants were required to sign second papers at higher figures of purchase; and will he say at what time and by whose orders, and on what grounds these two sets of papers were signed; and how matters in regard to the purchase stand at present?

MR. WALTER LONG: This matter is in the Land Judge's Court. It is not the case that any tenant has been required to sign a document increasing his purchase money. The tenants in the first place made certain offers, which, however, they subsequently reduced when they found that they were liable for a drainage maintenance charge. The Land Judge declined to accept the reduced offers, but suggested certain changes, to which all parties ultimately agreed. The sale is now practically concluded.

Colonial Conferences.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the importance of the Colonial Conferences and the desirability of making better provision for their continuity and efficiency, he will afford an opportunity for discussion of the matter before the close of the session.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The Government have for a long time past had under consideration methods—to use the words of the Question—for increasing the “continuity and efficiency” of these Colonial Conferences, and have been communicating with the Colonial Governments on the subject. I may, perhaps, be allowed to express my gratification at the interest which the right hon. Gentleman takes in the subject. I have lately been censured for allowing a conference to meet.

The Government and the Taxation of Food.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, having in view his recent announcement of the Government's policy in relation to colonial preference, whether he can now state the Government's attitude towards the preferential taxation of wheat and flour in the mother country.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have nothing to add to what I have said on this subject.

MR. BLACK: Is any scheme of colonial preference possible without taxation of corn in this country?

[No Answer was returned.]

NEW BILL.

POOR LAW (SCOTLAND) BILL.

“To amend the Law relating to the relief of the poor and to parish council administration in Scotland, and for other purposes connected therewith,” presented by the Lord-Advocate; supported by Mr. Cochrane; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, June 20th, and to be printed. [Bill 244.]

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I rise to move the two Resolutions of which I gave notice at yesterday's sitting. They are

couched in the traditional form, and they strictly follow ancient precedent. It might be feared that as these occasions occur from time to time ancient forms might lose their substance and that in the thanks we propose to you, Mr. Speaker, and in the recognition that we now intend to make of your great services to the House, we should be doing no more than to carry out in a more or less perfunctory fashion a recognition of duties easily performed. Every man in this House, however, knows that the duties of Mr. Speaker are perhaps the most responsible of any of those exercised within this Chamber, and that the burden of responsibility thrown upon the Chair, so far from diminishing as years go on, is likely, perhaps, if it changes at all, to change in the direction of increase; for there is not a man of us who does not know, either instinctively or after reflection and observation of our proceedings, that, owing to the inevitable changes which changes in the franchise have brought with them, which the ever-growing power of this House carries with it, which the increase of the responsibilities of government and of Empire carry in their train, our proceedings are inevitably going through a transitional period which, in my judgment at all events, has not yet come to an end, and that rules and customs of procedure which were adequate to an easier time and to simpler duties have been found inadequate, and will yet be found inadequate, to deal with the complications of modern responsibilities.

There was a time when the dangers to this House—dangers to our liberties and privileges, to our position in the country—came from without. They now come from within. I am one of those who take an optimistic view of the future of this House, but I believe there is not a man on either side at present but will agree with me that, however optimistic and however justly optimistic he may be as to our future, it is not always easy, it cannot be easy, to pass through the period of transition of which I have spoken without peril and without difficulty. Now, Mr. Speaker, it is the occupant of your Chair who, more than any other single individual in this House, has thrown upon him the

heavy burden of dealing with these difficulties as they arise, and when I get up in my place, and when I am followed by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, when we rise and others in different parts of the House rise to express to you our gratitude for the way in which you have dealt with the difficulties of your position, it certainly is not in any formal or routine spirit that we do it, but with the strongest recognition of the difficulties with which you and your predecessors and your successors have inevitably to deal, and of the admirable manner in which you have carried out the duties entrusted to you.

Mr. Speaker, you have the first of all qualifications for the occupant of the Chair—you love the House of which you are the head; and all those who have had the advantage of conversation with you upon Parliamentary subjects know how profound is the erudition which you possess upon the interesting and instructive but still unwritten history of the House of Commons. These qualities, great as they are, would of themselves be insufficient if you did not add to them that knowledge of the rules, that rapid presence of mind which is able to deal with an unexpected situation in a manner which, if it does not convince every man in the House that the course taken is the best course, does convince every man that it is the course which to you appears the fairest to all Parties, to the minority as to the majority, and to the majority as to the minority, and if you did not exercise your high functions not only with ability, but with that courtesy which commands the affection as well as the respect of all the members of this great Assembly. I do not know that I can add anything to what I have said about the exercise of your high office; but you will forgive me if in taking your departure from among us I venture to make myself the mouthpiece of Members on this side of the House certainly, and I believe on both sides of the House, when I say on their behalf that we not merely admire you as one who has filled a very responsible and difficult office with the greatest distinction, but that we, each one of us in our individual capacity, feel for you

respect, regard, and, I would venture to add, affection. To each one of us, whatever position he may occupy, who has come to you for advice and assistance with regard to any special difficulty connected with his Parliamentary responsibilities, you have always been a kind friend, a judicious adviser, and in the long and happy career which we hope for you I am confident you will carry away not merely the memory of great responsibilities worthily fulfilled, but also the personal devotion of every one of those over whom you have so long and so admirably presided.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purpose of briefly seconding the Motion which has been submitted by the First Lord of the Treasury. I am sure that in this Assembly on this occasion there is one single desire, a desire to do honour to one who through ten years, ten active and busy years, has presided with dignity and impartiality over our deliberations, and a desire also to show our grateful recognition and acknowledgment of your steadfast devotion to the interests and the service of the House of Commons. We have learnt with regret from you, Sir, that you have felt the necessity growing upon you, on the ground of health, to seek relief from the burdens of your office. Sir, we can well understand that necessity. As the right hon. Gentleman has said, the work of the House of Commons, and the claims, therefore, which it makes on the Members of the House, increases on our hands year by year, and this growth of business, while it presses heavily on the individual Member, must involve a far more severe strain upon him who is chosen to control and to assist us in the discharge of our high Parliamentary duties. Sir, I remember, and many others will remember, that when you were appointed to the Chair of this House there were many who felt doubt, and a very natural doubt, whether you would be able to discharge its duties on the ground that you had been for a comparatively brief time a Member of the House, and during that time had not taken any very prominent part in our debates and our business. But those who knew you then were confident of your ability to rival, at least, all your distinguished predecessors in the

Chair, and we are now able to say that we are, one and all of us, your debtors for public services loyally rendered, for advice and counsel freely afforded, for great duties worthily discharged, and for the unfailing courtesy with which every request and appeal addressed to you has been met. We shall always recall with gratitude and pleasure the years we have passed under your presidency, and I join in the hope expressed by the Prime Minister, that in the years that are before you, which we hope will be many, you will have none but proud and happy memories of the Chair of the House of Commons.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for his distinguished services in the Chair for more than ten years; that he be assured that this House fully appreciates the zeal, ability, and impartiality with which he has discharged the duties of his high office through a period of unusual labour, difficulty, and anxiety, and the judgment and firmness with which he has maintained its privileges and dignity; and that this House feels the strongest sense of his unremitting attention to the constantly increasing business of Parliament, and the uniform urbanity and kindness which have earned for him the respect and esteem of this House."—*(Mr. A. J. Balfour.)*

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Mr. Speaker, the value of the compliment which is proposed in this Resolution depends to a very large extent upon the unanimity of the House. The Speaker of this Assembly is the guardian of the rights and privileges and liberties not only of the House as a whole, but of every section of the House and of every individual Member of it. Upon his firmness and his fairness may be said to depend entirely the rights and liberties of all minorities, and the smaller the minority the greater is the responsibility thrown on the Chair of safeguarding its rights. When a minority is of a permanent character, and when it openly avows its desire to remain aloof from the rest of the House, and has no share in the admittedly proud history and traditions of this Assembly; when it is here against its will, and is here to voice

Mr. A. J. Balfour.

sentiments which are unpopular with the majority of the House, then, I beg leave to say, the responsibility thrown on the Chair is intensified a hundredfold—the responsibility for the protection of the rights and liberties of such a body. I represent here to-day such a minority, and if, speaking in the name of my colleagues and myself, I can support this Resolution, I venture humbly to say that that fact enhances the value of the compliment which is about to be paid to you.

I can truthfully associate myself with everything that has been said by the two right hon. Gentlemen who have spoken, but there is one reservation which I feel bound to make, even at the risk of seeming to strike a discordant note in the harmony of these proceedings. But allow me first to say that I heartily agree with the statement in this Resolution with reference to the zeal, ability, and impartiality of your action in the Chair. So far as the zeal is concerned, we have all been witnesses of the unremitting and unceasing attention to the duties of the Chair, which, perhaps, to some extent are responsible for your early departure from it. We all recognise that you have brought a distinguished ability to the discharge of the difficult duties of your position, and we have all been witnesses of the dignity with which you have borne your high office; and, Sir, let me say that we all agree that you have manifested on all occasions a desire to act with judgment and impartiality. Those with whom I am associated in this House have more than once during these years been brought into somewhat sharp conflict with the Chair. More than once we have questioned the soundness of the decisions arrived at by you, and upon one memorable occasion we submitted to the House of Commons a Motion formally challenging a decision which you had given. But, Sir, I can truthfully say to-day that we did not think then, and we do not think now, that upon any of those occasions you were ever animated by any but the highest motives, or that you were ever consciously partial in any decision you came to. Therefore it is that I feel at liberty, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, to support this Resolution.

I spoke a moment or two ago about a reservation. Complimentary and valedictory proceedings like the present would, in my opinion, lose all their flavour, and perhaps, indeed, I may say, all their value, if they were not sincere; and my part in these proceedings would not be sincere—I would feel that I were playing in these proceedings the part of a hypocrite—if I did not claim that in my humble judgment no more fatal precedent was ever set than when policemen were brought into the House for the forcible removal of Members whose only violation of order was the refusal to leave their seats and walk into the division lobby. The circumstances of the moment may have necessitated the creation of a new precedent—I express no opinion upon that—but I say there were many other devices that could have been resorted to; and therefore I feel bound, in supporting this Resolution, in the name of my colleagues and myself to enter that protest and that reservation. Having said that—and it is no pleasant thing for any man to say even so much by way of reservation in reference to one who, so far as I am personally concerned, has shown me the greatest kindness and courtesy, for which I feel grateful—having said so much, allow me in conclusion to say, in the name of my colleagues and myself—we earnestly pray that when, Mr. Speaker, you leave that Chair, you may for many long years enjoy those honours that are about to be bestowed upon you, and which by the admission of everybody have been well earned by long years of zealous and distinguished service to your countrymen.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I desire to add a few words—a very few—to those that have fallen from previous speakers. I desire to associate myself entirely with all that has been said by the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition; and, in regard to what has just fallen from the hon. Member for Waterford, I would only say any allusion to that from any other Member is unnecessary, since the hon. Member has accompanied his statement with a most graceful assurance of the strong feeling which he and his colleagues entertain with regard to the goodness of

your intentions and of the impartiality with which you have interpreted them. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition referred, I think, with timeliness to the occasion when you were first elected to the Chair of this House, and he reminded us that there were some (amongst whom was myself) who at that time felt that the fact that you were a comparative stranger to most of us might add to the difficulties which are inherent in the great office you hold, in a manner which would be found to be embarrassing. I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman referred to the difference of opinion which existed at that time, because it also recalls the occasion only a few weeks later when, a change having taken place in the composition of this House, you were unanimously re-elected. I remember well that the late Sir John Mowbray, then, I think, the father of the House and one of its most honoured and respected Members, was able to say that having been elected by one Party you were now by your conduct in the Chair giving satisfaction to all Parties. Sir, I do not think a greater testimony could have been paid to any man than that, and I am sure that to you it must have been specially gratifying as evidence of the impartiality and the ability with which you had already occupied the Chair. You gained our confidence then. You have never lost it. We have recognised in you many of the characteristics of your greatest predecessors. We have noted your quick appreciation of the innumerable questions submitted to you; we have observed the impartiality with which you have dealt with our business; and, especially, we have noticed, and are grateful for, the urbanity, the courtesy, the accessibility which you have shown to every Member of the House. We all share the regret at the circumstances which have now led you to retire from the office which you have filled with so much dignity; and we all hope that in your comparative leisure you may be entirely restored to full health and vigour, and that you may still find an opportunity of giving a portion of your time and the benefit of your great experience of affairs to the service of your country.

SIR ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorgan-shire, E.): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the
Mr. J. Chamberlain.

Welsh Members of the House—for I am authorised by my hon. friend the Member for Denbigh Boroughs to include the Welsh Conservatives on this occasion—I beg to express our deep regret that you have thought it necessary to sever your connection with the office which you have filled so long and with so much distinction. We can quite understand how onerous and exacting must be the duties of the President of this Assembly when we realise how much they have increased in the case of private Members, and especially when we remember the new obligations and responsibilities that have been thrown upon the Speaker. But while we deeply regret your retirement we are glad to know that it is your own act and deed. It cannot be said of the present Speaker nor of his predecessors that “superfluous lags the veteran on the stage.” It is to us a source of pride that the Speakers of the House of Commons cherish such high ideals regarding their office and duties. That was most forcibly brought to my mind on the resignation of Mr. Speaker Peel when I privately intimated to him how greatly I regretted his decision. His reply was, “When I find myself no longer able to give my best I have no right to continue in office.” We were glad to hear yesterday that the reason which prompted your illustrious predecessor was also that on which you acted, and I think I can say for all present, we sincerely trust that your health will soon be re-established and enable you to enjoy the tranquil atmosphere of another place and the society of the lady who so graciously presided over the social functions associated with your high office.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): Speaking in the name of the Irish Members on this side of the House, I have the advantage—some might think it a disadvantage—of having been a Member of this House under four Speakers, and I can say most conscientiously and sincerely that you, Sir, by the course you have pursued in that Chair, occupy a position in no degree inferior to any of the others. I am glad that on this occasion the Irish Members on both sides of the House are almost agreed. We still take

no exception to any part of the Resolution. I am glad of this because, if the House will allow me to say it, I think the Irish Members in this House are especially gifted with the power of understanding what a Speaker ought to be. They have, in my estimation, been endowed, most of them, with the faculty of eliciting and bringing to the surface those great qualities which are necessary in any great Speaker. I may say with all respect in your case that it was not long after you took your seat in that Chair before the Irish Members on both sides of this House knew that there was a right man in the right place. What are these qualities that the Irish Members on both sides of the House have elicited not only from you, but from your predecessors? These good qualities are, first of all, urbanity in the Chair, kindness towards those who approach you, but above all, readiness and courage. These qualities, I think, have pre-eminently distinguished your course in the Chair. There is one other thing, Sir, I may perhaps allude to. This House of Commons, of which I have been so long a Member, has always struck me as not only a House composed of six or seven hundred Members, divided by Party, by creed, and by other circumstances, but as on occasion acting as one man. And, Sir, it has its likes and its dislikes quite apart from the place in the House where the Members sit. You have essentially acquired the liking of the House of Commons. And, therefore, Sir, speaking for my colleagues—and I am sure on this occasion I speak for my fellow-countrymen opposite—I can only say that we hope that Providence may give you many days to enjoy the honour which I have no doubt His Majesty will confer upon you for the manner in which for so many years you conducted our affairs and maintained the dignity and the honour of the House of Commons.

MR. BELL (Derby): I desire to say a few words and to associate with them my hon. friends who may claim practically to represent the working classes in this House. We claim that distinction, although on occasions we are told we are not representing them. To-day some one has got up and claimed to represent

each different section of Members here assembled; and as we claim for ourselves to be essentially a section of this House, we desire to associate ourselves with the Resolution now before the House. It is difficult sometimes for every individual Member to see that he is at all times fairly treated. Members on some occasions are unsuccessful in their endeavours to catch the Speaker's eye, but that is not because of any partiality shown or intended in the selection of the Member whom the Speaker calls upon to address the House. We are able to recognise that in a large Assembly such as this it is not possible for every one to speak when he likes; every one knows that when he has not the fortune to catch the Speaker's eye. I can say most cordially that during the five years I have had the honour of being a Member of this House—I believe the majority of the Labour Members entered the House after you began your occupation of the Chair—I can heartily say that in my Parliamentary experience I found no unfairness or prejudice of any kind shown or in any way indicated in connection with the Labour Members. I join in the expressions of good wishes which have come from previous speakers. I trust, Sir, you may long live to enjoy the best of health and the pleasures of retirement.

Resolved, *Nemine Contradicente*, That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for his distinguished services in the Chair for more than ten years; that he be assured that this House fully appreciates the zeal, ability, and impartiality with which he has discharged the duties of his high office through a period of unusual labour, difficulty, and anxiety, and the judgment and firmness with which he has maintained its privileges and dignity; and that this House feels the strongest sense of his unremitting attention to the constantly increasing business of Parliament, and the uniform urbanity and kindness which have earned for him the respect and esteem of this House.

Then Mr. Speaker addressed the House as followeth (all the Members being uncovered):—

“The thanks of the House, expressed in the terms of such a Resolution as this,

are the highest and most precious honour and reward that can be conferred upon an occupant of this Chair. They cast into the shade every other honour or thanks that could be offered to him. But that honour is doubled when the Resolution has been recommended to the House in language of such generous, and, if I may use the word, such friendly appreciation as has been used by the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who have spoken. In saying that, I do not make any distinction between the hon. Member for Waterford and the rest. I regard what he has said as being as cordial and kindly an appreciation of my services to the House, as any words that have been spoken by other right hon. and hon. Members.

"Of course I am aware that it is impossible for any Speaker to expect that he can at all times use his judgment in a way that is agreeable to every Member of the House. He must expect that there will be occasions on which they differ at the time and some upon which they will continue to differ from him. Some of those occasions will be important and others unimportant. The hon. Member for Waterford referred to one occasion which was an important occasion, but that was a matter of judgment, and it is not of judgment that we are speaking to-day except in general terms. What gratifies me in the speeches of all the hon. Members, including the hon. Member for Waterford, and the only matter to which I attach importance, is the recognition that my motives have been good and that to the best of my ability I have carried out the principles of justice and impartiality in this Chair.

"I well remember that when I first stood in the place in which I am standing now, more than ten years ago, I pledged myself to the House that to the best of my abilities I would discharge my duties with diligence, fidelity, and efficiency, without fear or favour and without respect of persons. That is the object I have had before my mind all the time I have been in this Chair. There has never been an hour in which that principle has not been present to my mind. It has been my earnest and constant endeavour to fulfil that promise,

Mr. Speaker.

and I owe the deepest gratitude to the House for the assurance it has given me that I have not altogether failed in my efforts.

"I cannot trust myself to speak at any length upon this matter. I heartily thank again the House and the right hon. and hon. Members who have spoken to the Motion. I pray that this House may ever continue to enjoy the dignity, the privileges, and the power for usefulness for which it has for so many years been famous."

Resolved, "That the thanks of this House be given to Mr. Speaker for what he has said this day to the House; and that the same be printed in the Votes of this day, and entered in the Journals of this House."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Resolved, *Nemine Contradicente*, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, praying His Majesty that he will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of His royal favour upon the right hon. William Court Gully, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in which he has with such distinguished ability and dignity presided in the Chair of this House, and assuring His Majesty that whatever expense His Majesty shall think fit to be incurred upon that account this House will make good the same."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

To be presented by Privy Councillors and Members of His Majesty's Household.

CHURCHES (SCOTLAND).

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): In asking leave to introduce this Bill, I trust the House will grant me the indulgence of allowing me to deal with this matter on the footing that every Member is as familiar with the existing ecclesiastical situation in Scotland as the Scottish Members have, unfortunately, to make themselves. The judgment of the House of Lords in the Scottish Church case had the effect of declaring with regard to the property with which they dealt that the United Free Church had no right to it, but that it belonged to the Free Church, subject, however—and

I trust this will be kept in view—to the trusts under which it was held at the time of the union. Following on that judgment, further litigation has ensued, and, as the House is aware, a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the matters. The Commission reported, amongst other points, to the effect that the Free Church could not adequately execute all the trusts, and that in dealing with the property liberal provision should be made for the equipment of the Free Church.

We propose in the Bill to proceed on the main lines indicated by the Report of that Commission. In the first place we propose to set up an Executive Commission consisting of five members. The names I am not yet in a position to mention to the House, but they will be in due course submitted. That Commission is to have power to deal with all the property belonging to the United Free Church at the date of the union in October, 1900. They are to allocate it between the two Churches as seems to them fair and equitable, subject to the provisions of the statute, and in particular they are to make adequate provision for the education of students of the Free Church; for the support of aged and infirm ministers, and the widows and orphans of ministers of that Church, for supplementing congregational contributions towards the support of ministers of the Free Church, and for the general purposes of that Church; and for these objects they are to be entitled to take such part of the property as they think proper. As regards congregational property, they are to allot that to the Free Church or its congregations in all cases where the members and adherents of the Free Church congregation are in number equivalent to one-third of what in the opinion of the Commissioners the congregations would have amounted to if the union had not taken place. The orders which the Commissioners think necessary for carrying into effect any allocation are to have statutory force, and they may make interim orders, which are to have temporary effect. The proceedings of the Commissioners are not to be reviewed or interfered with by the Courts of Law. All litigation and difference between the Churches as to the

property in dispute are to be sifted or stayed, and no further such proceedings are to be instituted before the property has been allocated by the Commissioners. The Commissioners are to have power to appoint Assistant Commissioners, and both Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners are to be entitled to examine witnesses on oath. The expenses of the Commission are to be defrayed out of the funds in question.

That, I think, indicates in the main the general principles upon which we propose that the Commission should deal with the allocation of the property, the powers they are to have, and the freedom from interference by the ordinary Courts of Law. But the question has been raised as to whether conditions should not be imposed on those who are to receive the property under the orders of the Commission, as to the administration of it, and the terms on which it is to be held. This, in the opinion of the Government, raises large issues, which have been further complicated by certain proceedings in the General Assemblies held last month. May I remind the House that the Free Church has, in accordance with the resolution of the General Assembly, represented to the Government their claim of right of 1842-43. The United Free Church has put forward an assertion and protest that she has independent and exclusive jurisdiction and power of legislating in all matters of doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church, including therein the right from time to time to alter, change, add to, or modify her constitution, law, subordinate standards, and church formulas; and it is declared that the Church holds her property and funds present and future in conformity with these principles. The Church of Scotland, by unanimous declaration of her General Assembly, has asked for power to relax the formula in connection with the Confession of Faith at present required to be subscribed by her ministers and professors.

The claims of the Church of Scotland may be explained by saying that she desires to be free from the strict terms of the Act of 1693 as to the subscription of ministers, and the corresponding statute of 1708 as to the subscription

of professors. The Act of 1693 has always been regarded in many quarters as impinging on the revolution settlement of 1688-90 and especially on the liberties of the Church under the statute of 1690. That statute provided that the Confession of Faith was ratified and established and approved as the public and avowed Confession of the Church, and that statute still remains. The Church desires, however, to have the freedom that she enjoyed under that statute before the Act of 1693 was passed to prescribe the precise terms of the formula of subscription which will be exacted from her ministers and professors. She has that power as to her elders, and she desires to have the same power as to her ministers and professors.

The Government have given the matters I have referred to their most anxious and careful consideration, and they have come to the opinion that they ought all to be dealt with at the same time. Accordingly by this Bill we propose that the Free Church shall be vested in the property allocated to her free from all the original trusts, and subject only to its being applied to the purposes of the Free Church as I have already indicated. We propose, similarly, that the United Free Church, even after that declaration of her power to alter her subordinate standards and formulæ, should receive the property allocated to her, subject only to this condition that it shall, so far as possible, remain in the hands of the United Free Church, appropriated to the same or similar purposes as it now stands appropriated to. That is to say, Home Mission property will stand appropriated for Home Missions, Foreign Missions, property for Foreign Missions, and so on, but otherwise no conditions shall be attached to the property to be given to the United Free Church. We propose, further, that the Church of Scotland shall be empowered to substitute for the existing formula of subscription of her ministers and professors such formula as may be prescribed by act of the General Assembly of the said Church with the assent of the majority of the Presbytery thereof. That is to say, that the large representation of laymen which is allowed in our Scottish Presbyterian Church

Court—that the laymen and clergymen shall be consulted; that the Presbytery by a majority must approve, but subject to the provisions of the Barrier Act the Church of Scotland shall get this relaxation. We believe that in dealing with this matter in this way we are dealing with it fairly and justly. We think that the claims of the Church are sympathised with by many outside her own bounds, and we trust that the proposals I have indicated, and which really, in the main, set out all the proposals of the Bill, will be regarded, as we regard them, as being in every respect generous, as being in all respects just, and as being those which will conduce to the settlement of difficult questions in a manner acceptable to the people of Scotland, to whatever Church they may belong. And believing that, we trust the House will accept the Bill as a settlement of these questions. I beg to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the settlement of certain questions between the Free Church and the United Free Church in Scotland, and to make certain Amendments of the Law with respect to the Church of Scotland.”—(*The Lord-Advocate.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I think the Government have taken a wise course in introducing this Bill by the summary procedure which we know as the ten minutes rule, and that not because of the small importance of the Bill, but because of the immense importance of it, and the necessity at the earliest possible moment of placing the provisions of the Bill before the people of Scotland, who have been hungering and thirsting for it for at least a month, and thus enabling a well-informed judgment to be arrived at on the subject before any decision is expressed here. While agreeing with the bringing forward of the Bill in this way, at the same time I think it is well I should say this by way of caveat for the future—that the circumstances of this case are so abnormal, so exceptional, that I hope it will not be taken as a precedent for introducing large and important Bills of this sort in this summary manner.

Mr. Scott Dickson.

Now I proceed to the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman has very properly not recited to the House the circumstances under which this legislation arises. I will say at once that the idea of referring the matter to a Statutory Executive Commission is the right idea. It is the idea which occurred to very many of us early last autumn. I remember myself making a speech in Edinburgh—where people sometimes make speeches—and I then suggested this very course. The Government have proceeded in a tentative manner. They appointed a Commission of Inquiry, exceedingly well conducted by Lord Elgin and his colleagues, and therefore I think they strengthened their hands before proposing this somewhat drastic course. The proposal, therefore, of the Bill for dealing with the case generally will, I hope, be such as shall win our approval. We shall approve anything which shall be simple, complete, and effective, and as immediate as possible in its work and general effect, because it cannot be doubted the longer this matter has been delayed the wider has been the divorce between legality on the one hand and equity, common-sense, and, I would almost say, decency, on the other. I must, therefore, that the earliest possible time will be that at which this Commission will be put in operation in order to put a stop to a state of things which cannot be called otherwise than scandalous.

But now I come to what I am afraid is the crux of the position. The Government are proposing to introduce into this simple matter of settling a grave dispute between two Churches, which has been aggravated greatly, of course, by the decision of the highest Court of Law—I do not challenge that decision in the least; what we have to do with is the result of it, but into that simple matter they have introduced the question of altering the constitution of the Church of Scotland which has nothing whatever to do with the question, and as to which I may remark that we have no information whatever as to any claim or desire for this great fundamental change. I think it is a very great mistake that this new and adventitious element should be introduced. I put aside altogether the question whether an alteration of the formula

of the Church of Scotland may be a good or a bad thing. We have nothing whatever to do with that at this stage. What I say is that there are many most serious objections to introducing these provisions into the Bill.

My first objection is this. The object is to restore peace, ecclesiastical peace, in Scotland, to prevent injustice, and to remove the ecclesiastical deadlock that prevails. Anything that delays that object is mischievous—and I may point out that hitherto, and I hope in the future also, in a matter which is essentially a matter of common sense, there has been no element of Party feeling whatever; no desire to make Party capital, or to treat it in a Party way at all, but there has been introduced a totally different matter, which, whether it be good or bad, will at all events take a long time to settle. You are not going in a casual way like this to give the Church of Scotland a new constitution in the expiring days of an expiring Parliament when we have no knowledge of the opinion of the people of Scotland or the opinion of the people of the Church of Scotland on it. I am quite aware that only the other day a resolution was passed in the General Assembly, but it had never been heard of until a week or two before, and after it was introduced there were amendments and difficulties raised. Then in a mysterious way an understanding was arrived at and an unanimous resolution was come to. Before you alter the constitution of the Church of Scotland you must have more than a week or two's consideration, and possibly a rushed resolution accepted by an individual General Assembly. It is impossible to expect that you could do it. We ought to know what the people of Scotland think and what the members of the Church of Scotland think.

The Government are raising here a matter to which it will be difficult to set bounds. This is not a Scotch question only. In its original scope it was a Scotch question, no doubt, and I venture to say that half-a-dozen Members of this House and half-a-dozen people from outside could adopt this Bill and easily make a scheme for an Executive Commission which would answer the purpose, which is at the heart

of the people of Scotland. But if you once begin tampering with the formulas and the creeds of ecclesiastical bodies where are you to stop, and why should it be confined to the country North of the Tweed? I put it to English Members. What would they think, if some controversy or dispute as to their trust funds arose between unestablished Churches in England, or perhaps between two sections of one of those Churches, and if they became so acute and involved that it was necessary to come to Parliament for legislation in order to stop the evil and solve the difficulty, if the Government, introducing a Bill for that purpose, were to introduce clauses enabling the Church of England to rewrite its constitution? That would be an exactly parallel case. English Members can judge how serious a matter this is, and, to use a very common figure, what a spoke the Government have put into the wheel of conciliation and settlement in Scotland by introducing this absolutely uncalled-for provision relating to the formulas of the Church of Scotland.

I do not entertain anything but respect and affection for the Church of Scotland, and I am not stating a word against greater liberty for that Church or expressing any opinion on the subject at all, but I say, to put it into this Bill is to put into this ship a cargo that will make it founder, and I do not think any persons who do that are good friends of the prosperous voyage of the ship towards its destined haven, which would be the restoration of ecclesiastical peace in Scotland to the satisfaction of the desires of the Scottish people of all Churches, and the saving of further injury to the spiritual interests of her people. I have wished to say in as clear and strong and short a method as I could the view that we take. So far as this Bill sets up an Executive Commission—we may pick holes in the Commission, I hope not, but we cannot say until we have seen the Bill. I have no doubt that the matter could easily be composed, but the introduction of this novel element, this extraneous adventitious element, into this Bill is a fatal course, and I believe it will cause the greatest excitement and indignation throughout that country which has its interests so deeply involved in this matter.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

Question agreed to. Bill ordered to be brought in by The Lord-Advocate and Mr. Attorney-General.

CHURCHES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

“To provide for the settlement of certain questions between the Free Church and the United Free Church in Scotland, and to make certain Amendments of the Law with respect to the Church of Scotland,” presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 20th June, and to be printed. [Bill 245.]

CHURCHES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do Examine the Churches (Scotland) Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*The Lord-Advocate.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN asked when the Bill would be circulated.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said that the Bill would be circulated to-day or to-morrow. Meantime, some copies could be obtained in the Bill Office.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE (WHITSUNTIDE).

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That this House, at its rising To-morrow, do adjourn till Tuesday, June 20th.”—(*Mr. A. J. Balfo ur.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I pass now to another subject. This appears to me to be the proper opportunity for reviving the inquiries we have been making as to the intentions of the Government with regard to the conference or conferences to which the fiscal question is to be referred. But when I look at the Order-book I find one notice standing in the name of the hon. Member for East St. Pancras to call attention to Ministerial statements on the Colonial Conference, and a second notice in the name of the hon. Member for Preston to call attention

to the fiscal aspect of the Colonial Conference, and to move a Resolution. I therefore find myself debarred from calling attention to a very singular fact. After what happened ten days or a fortnight ago in this House it appears from speeches made in another place that the Answers given by the First Lord of the Treasury on May 22nd to Questions on this subject have been absolutely put aside, and that the Government fall back on the declarations of the Prime Minister at Edinburgh last year. It is to be regretted, therefore, that this resolution was not arrived at sooner, because a great deal of controversy would have been saved. It was the discrepancy between the two policies which caused me to move the adjournment of the House on the 22nd of last month, and all that has happened since on the subject in this House turns on the same circumstances. I think that it is an odd thing that these Answers of the Prime Minister should be thus practically withdrawn and cancelled without information.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman read the answers?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Oh, I have got them. But if I read them all I am afraid that I will occupy a great deal of time.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not got the documents here, but the right hon. Gentleman can emphasise the points to which he chiefly takes objection. I think it will be sufficient.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot, because the hon. Members for East St. Pancras and Preston have blocking notices on the Paper and I should be out of order.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I want the Answers alleged to be withdrawn.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Answers given on May 22nd are totally inconsistent with the statements made before, and these Answers have not been formally withdrawn. They are ignored or dropped without explanation,

without regret, and without apology. The solemn Answers are given to my hon. friends as to the intention of the Government, and it turns out that the Government have no such intention as was expressed many months ago; and I think that something is owing to my hon. friends and the House, while the incident should not be allowed to slip without observation. But all that is passed, and we cannot go into the question on account of the blocking Motions, nor even into the circumstances of the previous statements. But I note the fact that the incident has occurred.

Within the last few days we have received new and authoritative declarations of policy which have been promulgated with great form and ceremony. From the Prime Minister's speech at the Albert Hall I do not think it was quite apparent that the policy of the Government was what it is now going to be, because it seemed to me to be rather a simple reaffirmation in substance of the Edinburgh speech. But we are under an obligation, not for the first time, to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, who in his kindly way has explained the significance of that speech in the Albert Hall. He said that the Prime Minister's speech set forth a policy so clear that it could not be misunderstood even by me. I do not know whether that is a compliment to my ingenuity or a desire to indicate a faculty of natural stupidity; but in either case the right hon. Gentleman adopts the course of setting up a standard of intelligibility, for if anyone had any doubts on the subject he was to apply to the nearest Liberal Unionist agent. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to speak of what he calls the official programme, to which he says that he so heartily subscribes. That is the thing we all want to know to-day. The right hon. Gentleman speaks of the flag which the Prime Minister has raised. Which flag does he mean? It is not only the peroration flag, which is the most stimulating of all, except to hon. Members opposite with free-trade leanings. It is more than that. He says that it is "the vast majority of the Party" who are invited to rally to the flag that the Prime Minister has

raised, "and with a great Party consolidated"—that is accomplished, I suppose, by the proscription of the free-traders—"and a great issue to fight for, we will carry the standard to victory, and that before a very long time has passed." I do not know about the time. It might have come almost already if the returning officer in the Chichester Division had fixed the date of the poll a little later. Such small things sometimes affect great issues, but this official programme, which is so clear, so simple, and so straightforward that even I can understand it is in fact a new "sheet of notepaper." What is it? "What did Mr. Balfour say?" asks the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. "He said last night tariff reform will be the most important part of Unionist policy; he said that colonial preference is the most important part of tariff reform; he said that colonial preference will therefore be the first item in the future Unionist programme." That is a real, unmistakable, straightforward, simple thing, which even I can understand as the policy of the Unionist Party at the general election. Lord Lansdowne, in his speech in the House of Lords, introduced our old friend retaliation, but in a very subsidiary character. Retaliation is like a poor relation; you cannot get rid of him altogether, and he has been useful in his day, but in the presence of greater things he has to retire to comparative obscurity.

But now I turn to another thing. The right hon. Gentleman talks of tariff reform. Let us know what is tariff reform. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham has told us what he means by tariff reform. He said it is the system of high tariffs prevailing in the United States and Germany. He declared that in point of employment and comfort and every other respect the working man was better off in Germany and America than here, and said—"When I next come among you let it be mine to say that with your help I have established the same condition of things in this country." So that at last we know where we are. We know the sort of enterprise with which the flag of the consolidated Party is to be carried. By preference is not suggested merely lip homage to the principle of mere con-

ference, but it means that the Unionist Party are mortgaged to the principle of the taxation of food. I think it is only right to take the opportunity of bringing this prominently and clearly before the country. But then it is said the Member for West Birmingham—who is he? said the Lord Chancellor. He is a much-respected private Member, for whose views the Government are not in the least responsible. That is not Lord Lansdowne's view, because Lord Lansdowne said this—

"The noble Duke referred to the speech delivered by Mr. Chamberlain on Saturday last, and he took exception to that speech as differing from the speech delivered by Mr. Balfour at the Albert Hall. I do not know that I have collated the two speeches with the same close care that the noble Duke has bestowed upon them. But I confess it seemed to me that Mr. Chamberlain had taken almost textually from Mr. Balfour's speech."

In fact, Lord Lansdowne can see no difference between them, and he made an appeal to the Duke of Devonshire to explain wherein they differed. This conflicts a little with the Lord Chancellor's idea of Mr. Chamberlain as a person worthy, indeed, of respect and admiration, but of no weight in this matter. Can that be held for a moment? The *status* of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham now is that of a party to a compact, and fresh from that compact he comes forward and makes that statement. It is not a statement of a casual Member of Parliament airing his own views, which the Government can afford to disregard. If such a word were applicable to a Lord Chancellor, I should say it is nonsense to say that he and his colleagues can regard Mr. Chamberlain's words as of no consequence at all. We have the endorsement of the view of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham by Lord Lansdowne in another place. That is the situation. Do I ask any light upon it? We have asked so often for light that I cease to expect to get any, but I take this opportunity, at all events, to note the position, and to confront the Prime Minister with this assertion of policy made by his chief follower and standard-bearer, and if he is now content to leave the matter as it stands, so am I.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I rather thought that this would be a topic which

the right hon. Gentleman would have reserved for the vote of censure. I have no objection to rise, though I confess there is not much in the right hon. Gentleman's speech which calls for any very lengthened observations from me in reply. The right hon. Gentleman began by informing the House, certainly very much to my astonishment, that I had withdrawn from the policy which I have stated in the course of the cross-examination to which I was subjected on May 22nd. I asked the right hon. Gentleman what particular propositions therein uttered by me I had withdrawn from, and he said they were too long to read, and my respectful suggestion as to what those propositions were he did not give me. I asked an hon. friend of mine to turn up the record of the House, and I have hastily glanced my eye over it, and I am not aware that there are any of those propositions which I have retracted.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: One proposition, for instance, which the right hon. Gentleman stated in answer to a Question was that there would not be, as we had expected there should be, two conferences, with an appeal to the people for authority before each—that the first conference would be the ordinary conference to take place next year, that there would be no general election before that, and he excused himself for having made two conferences a vital part of his policy in Edinburgh, preceded by two elections, by saying that he had forgotten what he called the automatic conference which is to take place next year. Will he reconcile his statements on that point?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think honestly that it would have been well that the right hon. Gentleman should have read out Question and Answer. I do not think it would have been longer than the explanation he has given, and I cannot help thinking that it might have been clearer. I have not the slightest conception of what he means by the policy of two conferences to which he says I pledged myself in Edinburgh. I have not the smallest glimmer of the notion that is in the right hon. Gentle-

man's mind. This is what I said in Edinburgh—

"My view, therefore, is that the policy of this Party should be, if we come into power after the next election, to ask the Colonies to join a conference on these lines—a conference in which the discussions shall be free, but whose conclusion shall not commit any of the communities concerned to any large plan of Imperial union on fiscal or other lines unless their various peoples have given their adhesion to the scheme."

That is the policy which I stated in Edinburgh, and that is the policy which I repeated on May 22nd, and to which I adhere. Neither is there in the Answer I gave in May, nor in the speech in Edinburgh, the smallest reference to any obligatory policy of two conferences. It is a pure invention of the right hon. Gentleman. I am not going into that—though I am not sure that I should not be justified, as I was attacked by the right hon. Gentleman—but I repeat emphatically that I did not intend, nor do I believe I did, as a matter of fact, in those Answers make any recantation of any previous views I have held. I still think them consistent with the Edinburgh speech; I still think them consistent with the policy which I should desire to lead the country to pursue.

The right hon. Gentleman has made a complaint that, owing to two notices standing in the name of hon. friends of mine, he cannot deal at length, and the House cannot deal, with the question of the Colonial Conference. I have two observations to make on that. The first is that we are here dealing with a subject which has been very often dealt with this session, and we are again going to deal with it on the vote of censure; and the second is that I put down on the Notice Paper of the House a modification of our rules which would have entirely removed the restriction placed upon our debates on the Motion for the holidays, and had the right hon. Gentleman's friends permitted that Resolution to go through uncontested neither the right hon. Gentleman nor any other hon. Gentleman would have been precluded by any notice on the Paper from discussing subjects which they desire the House to deal with.

I pass now to the only other point in the right hon. Gentleman's speech. I am

not sure that I apprehend the gravamen of his contention in this case as clearly as in the earlier part of his speech. He has read out a portion of a speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, but the obvious meaning of the passage would have been made much clearer if the right hon. Gentleman had continued the quotation a little further. But I am not going to deal with that because I dissent absolutely from the principle which appears to be a cardinal one amongst hon. Gentlemen opposite that my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham is to be judged by my version of his speeches and that I am to be judged by his version of my speeches. [OPPOSITION cheers.] That principle of Parliamentary exegesis, which is quite new in my experience, I observe is loudly cheered by hon. Gentlemen opposite. [OPPOSITION cries of "jeered," not "cheered."] I do not know whether they desire the same rule to be applied to themselves. I will not invidiously go into names, but I may say that in my opinion those who want to know the views I hold had better get them from my speeches, and not from other people's speeches. [AN HON. MEMBER: Tell your own Party to do the same.] They had better get my views from my speeches than from the comments of the Press and the criticisms of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Each man must be judged upon what he says and by what he does, and though I am painfully conscious that I have on various occasions not succeeded in hammering my ideas into the minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite—doubtless from my own deficiency and power of lucid exposition—and I have not been uniformly successful in making them understand what seem to me simple elementary propositions, at all events I ask for the common liberty of all mankind which is by their own acts and only by their own words, and by their own acts and words, should they be judged. Having said that, may I add that I shall not accept for my own part as a humble and independent critic the meaning which the right hon. Gentleman has decided to read into the speech of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. [AN HON. MEMBER: He read the words.] I am not going to

set myself up as the interpreter of anybody's speeches but my own, but I think I may be allowed to express the opinion that the quotation read by the right hon. Gentleman does not give a fair view of the meaning which I, at all events, gathered from the speech of my right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham. [AN HON. MEMBER: Throw him over frankly.]

MR. CHURCHILL (Oldham): In what respect does he differ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe my right hon. friend was perfectly acquainted with the views that I hold and which I expressed not for the first time in the Albert Hall. Hon. Gentlemen opposite talk as if it was in the Albert Hall that I for the first time said that this question of fiscal reform stood in the forefront of our constructive policy. It must be quite obvious that this is so, and I have said so on all occasions. It is equally obvious, and I have equally said so, that of all the branches of fiscal reform that which was connected with the problem of drawing closer the commercial bonds between us and our Colonies was the most important part of our policy. I further said, and again not for the first time, that in my opinion the only way to further that object was by a free conference into which the various members might enter unfettered and unhampered, and the appeal I made, and which I make again, if it gains force by repetition, to the Party to which I belong was to leave in suspension their judgment upon any scheme that such a conference might hammer out until the scheme was before them. That is my view, and that is the view I expressed at the Albert Hall. That is the view I express now, and that view is consistent, so far as I know, with everything that I have ever said. I lay no claim to verbal infallibility. I have been subjected, with and without notice, to innumerable Questions upon this point, and I have made in reference to it in the country and in this House innumerable speeches during the last two or three years, and certainly I am the last man to say that the anxious explorer into those utterances may not find something which, by ingenuity of interpretation, may be twisted in some

Mr. A. J. Balfour.

sense which is not wholly in conformity with what I have said.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): What about St. Helens?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not remember making any such statement, and in such references as I have since had to make in my innumerable contributions to this controversy I have not come across any unguarded phrases which might have given a wrong view to those who made the smallest attempt at a clear and accurate estimate of what the policy is which I placed before the country. Certainly the right hon. Gentleman quoted nothing the other night and nothing this evening to controvert that statement, and if I have risen on this occasion immediately after him, it is because I understand that by the canons of debate which hon. Gentlemen opposite desire to see carried out the whole case against any Minister attacked is contained in the first speech. Therefore, I may assume, and do assume, that no hon. Gentleman opposite has anything to add to the speech to which we have just listened. At all events, my views, I believe, were expressed with great clearness at the Albert Hall. Have they been expressed with insufficient clearness on the present occasion? They have not. Well, those are the views by which I stand.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Are you in favour of the taxation of food?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have just explained to the House that in my view the only way of settling this question of closer commercial relations with our Colonies is to see what can be done by a free conference and to wait until it has given its judgment. And yet the right hon. Gentleman asks me a Question as to the solution to be arrived at. I should be plainly contradicting every statement of policy which I have made to the House if I were to endeavour to deal with that Question. I do not know whether there is any other Question the right hon. Gentleman has asked me; at any rate I do not recall one to which an Answer is required. I trust that in the few words I have addressed to the

House I have—I will not say made plainer, because it was quite plain before—made clear a position which was never obscure and which certainly the right hon. Gentleman has not done anything in his attack to call into question. I do not think that my speech requires defence, and at any rate I am not attempting a defence this evening. I do not think it requires any apology. As to the meaning of those speeches I think they are absolutely clear. I believe I was successful in making my meaning obvious when I uttered those speeches, and if any doubt prevailed after those speeches were made that doubt must now be at an end.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the Prime Minister declined to be bound by anyone's interpretation of his speeches, and he asked the House to take that interpretation from himself. But the Leader of the House in another place, speaking in the name of the Prime Minister and setting forth his policy as the policy of the Government at the next election, surely was as authoritative upon that subject as the Prime Minister himself.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: You have misunderstood Lord Lansdowne. That is not what he said.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he would state the understanding most of them had of what Lord Lansdowne said. Lord Lansdowne said that the policy of the Government at the dissolution—having regard to what the Prime Minister said to-day, that colonial preference was the first matter in importance—would be in two branches. He said the first of these two branches would be retaliation, and the second would be the calling together of a free Colonial Conference. He was asked whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham had not stated the policy which was agreed upon as the policy for the dissolution in the same words with a difference in the second branch; and whether the second branch as stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was that the Prime Minister was in favour of colonial preference instead of merely in

favour of calling a conference on the subject. Lord Lansdowne's reply was that he could see no difference.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Lord Lansdowne repeated what has been reiterated over and over again, that closer commercial union with the Colonies was the great object of our policy.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that was so. But the question which must surely be resolved in one sense or the other before the dissolution was whether the Government were going to call a conference and whether that conference was to be free? The right hon. Gentleman had pledged himself distinctly to the House, had pledged everybody, including the Member for West Birmingham, who assented in the debate on the adjournment for the Whitsuntide holidays two years ago—a pledge which the right hon. Gentleman had constantly repeated since—that there should be no proposal for taxation of raw material. Had there been any change upon that point? They were hampered in regard to many subjects by “blocking” Motions, but surely they were at liberty to discuss the policy of the Government, which they had been explaining to the other House though not to the House of Commons. Surely they might ask that Question with regard to raw material, which was the subject of a distinct pledge, constantly repeated, by the Prime Minister, and a pledge quite different from that about food, because the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham concurred in it. The Leader of the House, in the debate two years ago, said that no person had suggested a tax on raw material, and the Member for West Birmingham approved that statement. They could not discuss this question until they knew whether that was a reserved matter or not. Did the Government depart from the pledge they had constantly repeated in the country upon the taxation of raw material?

The Prime Minister had only himself to thank for the confusions which had arisen in the House and in the country. The “automatic” conference was dead; Lord Lansdowne's speech had killed it. Every one knew that the Colonies would

not come to it, would not look at it, and all that House had now to consider was the new departure which was made by the speeches in another place a few days ago—speeches not in a mere academic debate, but laying down, for the first time, in sharp and concrete form, the questions upon which the Government were going to appeal to the country and to the whole Empire at the next election. And here was the House of Commons beginning to be doubtful about any pledges which had been made on this subject! The language used about the taxation of raw material by the Prime Minister on two occasions was as strong as any language could be, and, if there was a rag of consistency about the Government policy, those pledges would be maintained. And yet they now heard this constant repetition of a “free” conference! They were to go into this “free” and “unhampered” conference without the Government daring to tell the House and the country what they meant by “free” and “unhampered,” or whether they meant to adhere to their pledges against the taxation of raw material.

The Prime Minister complained that this subject should be raised to-day instead of on the vote of censure promised. But that vote of censure was already out of date. They must have a different vote of censure. [MINISTERIAL laughter.] Yes, because the situation was entirely changed by the interpretation of the speech of the Prime Minister given by the Member for West Birmingham and by the explanation of Lord Lansdowne of the apparent contradiction. The statement made by Lord Lansdowne as to the policy which was to be the policy of the dissolution was, he supposed, a final statement, and, if they were to believe that the policy of the Government and the question on which dissolution was to take place was thus clearly expressed, there could be no subject on which the House of Commons was more driven to insist on knowing the views of the Government than the question which had been raised that day. It was not raised by the vote of censure, and if another vote of censure on the changed circumstances were put down, it would have to be put down in different terms.

Sir Charles Dilke.

[MINISTERIAL laughter.] The Prime Minister laughed, but it was not the change of the Opposition. It was the change of the statement of the Government views—a change which, he feared, might go further even than the revelations which had yet taken place, because of the conspicuous desire of the Prime Minister to avoid answering any Question on the subject of the taxation of raw material.

The position of the Member for Birmingham had been discussed that day. It was a position they all revered, because he was the master of the Government. In Japan there was a constitutional system, but behind the Cabinet there was the Marquess Ito and the Council of the Elder Statesmen, and the Cabinet were puppets in their hands. That Council decided what the Cabinet were to do. The Member for Birmingham evidently exercised on the constituencies so powerful a hold that the Government were obliged to adopt his version of their speeches. And, although the Prime Minister had shown a certain, he would not say petulance, but a certain impatience at having the Member for Birmingham's version of his speech put forward as against his own, yet the speech of Lord Lansdowne showed that it was the Member for Birmingham who had triumphed. He would ask the Government two Questions. The first was, "Do the Government adhere to their pledges with regard to the reservation of raw material, forbidding any touching of the question of the taxation of raw material?" The second was, "Are they in favour of colonial preference, or are they, as the Member for West Birmingham says, in favour of calling a conference on colonial preference?" Until the Government had answered such Questions as these, they must expect vote of censure after vote of censure, but with the changes which they were executing they could not hope that those votes of censure would always remain in the same terms. The fiscal question over-rode all others, and if it wrecked the programme of the Government they had only themselves to blame for the manner in which they were treating that question, which by their own admission was of the most first-class

importance. This question intruded itself into everything. He saw the other day a newspaper report of the proceedings at an international conference which stated—he was not sure whether the statement was a joke or a mistake—that the principal delegate representing the Government of this country refused to agree to certain resolutions on the ground that it would be playing into the hands of the fiscal reformers in this country. Although there were blocking Motions on the Paper he did not think they should be prevented from discussing the position of India in relation to this question as raised in the statesmanlike speech of Lord Curzon.

MR. ELLIOT (Durham) said the Prime Minister had treated the question that evening in a manner which was hardly worthy of its importance. He was one of those who honestly wanted to arrive at the mind of His Majesty's Government. He wished to know, as a Unionist and a free-trader, what was the fiscal policy, if they had a policy, of the Government. He did not want to know what interpretation this or that right hon. Gentleman put upon the speeches of the Prime Minister at Edinburgh, or Manchester, or Sheffield, because the Prime Minister was now present himself. It was not necessary for them to run one series of interpretations against another series of interpretations. What the House wanted to know was his policy from his own mouth. He was present the other day in the House of Lords, and heard it stated on high legal authority that what they wanted to know was not only what Ministers said, but what they thought. The House of Commons was the place in the past where Ministers considered it their duty to say what they thought upon a question in which the public interest was deeply concerned. He said not one word about the conference, because he entirely agreed with the right hon. Baronet who had just spoken that the question of holding a conference before the dissolution was now practically a thing of the past in consequence of the speech of Lord Lansdowne in another place. The question he wished to deal with was not the question of the Colonial Conference. All of them looked to the holding of a Colonial Conference and liked the idea of

the representatives of the Colonies meeting periodically together with representatives of this country. That was not the question of the moment, of the day, or the hour.

The question was what the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government and his colleagues meant to do as regarded the tariff policy which was now put before the country on their behalf by no less a man than the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. It was said that Ministers could speak for themselves, and that the remarks of other people on their speeches were not binding upon them. But he had yet to learn that in politics, or in any other department of life, it was correct for a man to allow himself to be misinterpreted. Surely, if he were misinterpreted it was impossible for a man to stand by in silence when that misinterpretation was made, and when the question was afterwards raised to refuse to tell the House, "Yes," or "No," whether the interpretation put on his remarks was correct or not. It was for the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues to say what their policy was. He thought that in this respect he spoke for a considerable number of Unionist free-traders in the country when he said that they would be deeply disappointed if this opportunity were allowed to pass without the right hon. Gentleman severing the Government from the policy which had been announced as theirs by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. Of course, he knew that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was not a Minister of State. He knew nothing of the contract between the two right hon. Gentlemen; but he contended that the Prime Minister's intentions would necessarily be interpreted throughout the country by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, unless the right hon. Gentleman disavowed himself from the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. The Prime Minister would be necessarily associated with that policy unless he came forward and said that that policy was not his. The right hon. the Member for West Birmingham said at St. Helens—

"Mr. Balfour said last night that tariff reform will be the most important part of Unionist

policy; Mr. Balfour said that colonial preference is the most important part of tariff reform; Mr. Balfour said that colonial preference will, therefore, be the first item in the future Unionist programme."

Was the Prime Minister going to the country on that programme, or was he not? He admired the frankness with which the right hon. Member for West Birmingham put his whole case before the country, and he had never concealed his view that colonial preference rested on the taxation of food. Therefore, if colonial preference was the first item in the Party programme, it brought the question of the taxation of food directly before the electorate. Did his right hon. friend mean this? If he did not, why should he not say that he did not mean it?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, I choose to be cross examined on my own speech, and not on other people's.

MR. ELLIOT said that was merely fair. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had a right to say that he should not be judged by what other people said of him or his speeches. But there was a corollary to that. Why would not the right hon. Gentleman follow that remark up by telling them what he thought himself and what he meant? There was something almost unreal in these debates. He did not want any interpretation of the right hon. Gentleman's speeches at Edinburgh, Manchester, or the Albert Hall, he wished for no more comment, he wanted an original speech from the right hon. Gentleman now. Surely they had a right to know the minds of their Ministers, for this ambiguity and doubt was distressing. The right hon. Member for Birmingham told them clearly enough that what he wanted was a duty on corn, and other duties, high tariffs, and protection.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): No. I am afraid I must be as ambiguous as the hon. Gentleman says the Prime Minister is. Most certainly I have never gone in for a high tariff; I absolutely repudiate what the hon. Gentleman says.

MR. ELLIOT said he was glad the right hon. Gentleman when he thought

Mr. Elliot.

he was misinterpreted got up and told them what he did think. The right hon. Gentleman none the less seemed to have based a good deal of his arguments on high tariffs, otherwise he could not, in repeated allusions, have attached so much weight to the fiscal policy of Germany, the United States, and other protective countries which had systems of high tariffs. A dissolution was coming soon. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No, no!" and "Oh!"] Whether it came sooner or later there should be a clear issue on the fiscal question. They should know where statesmen stood, and on what grounds they were supporting them. If the policy of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was to be the policy of a great Party it would be a new Party; it ceased to be the old Conservative or the old Unionist Party; it became the Protectionist Party of the future. Hundreds of thousands of Unionists throughout the country would fight against a Party which hoisted the flag of protection. They knew from facts and figures that such a policy was contrary to the interests of the country, and its advocates had failed to convince the country that it would bring wealth and prosperity to the United Kingdom or consolidation to the Empire.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields) said that what they were concerned with was not so much any interpretations of the ambiguous phrases in the Prime Minister's speeches, but as to what were the actual intentions of the right hon. Gentleman, and on those intentions the right hon. Member for West Birmingham was an authority second only to the Prime Minister himself. That right hon. Gentleman told the executive of the Tariff Reform League more than a year ago that they could be assured of the Prime Minister's sympathy with their objects, and they must suppose that he did so with the express authority of the Prime Minister. The country was entitled to know from each right hon. Gentleman whether either of them intended to mislead the country. He himself had no doubt as to the view of the Prime Minister. That right hon. Gentleman was a protectionist, and a food protectionist like any other, but he had given that afternoon most remarkable reasons for reticence in this matter. In reply to the

right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, the right hon. Gentleman said that he had already explained that that question was involved in the question of colonial preference which was to be submitted to the Colonial Conference, and that it could not be dealt with until the conclusions of the Colonial Conference were known. It therefore came to this, that we, the mother country, were not to know whether the Government was in favour of a tax upon food until a Colonial Conference had discussed the subject and arrived at a conclusion with regard to it. He remembered how a great colony was lost to us because we tried to tax the people without their consent. Now the Colonies were to be invited to tax the mother country. Let them take care that they did not lose the mother country as we lost the United States of America. The right hon. Gentleman did credit neither to himself nor his Ministry in putting forward so flimsy and ridiculous a plea for concealing his views upon what was at the present time a vital matter. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that that necessitated the conference being free. The only muzzled Member of the conference apparently was to be England. The representative of England was to hold his tongue and was not to be allowed to speak a word. When the colonial delegates had put their views before the conference there was to be a general election. When we had heard their views and heard their proposals and their offer we were to have a general election to say whether the Colonial Conference was to tax our food or not. In his view the Prime Minister that afternoon had trifled with the subject, and in so doing had played an uncandid and unworthy part.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER (Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw) said it appeared to him, after reading the speeches made recently by the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham on the subject (and it was laid down most clearly in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham at St. Helen's), that this question could not be placed before the country until we had had a conference of the whole Empire. Until that time everybody should keep an open mind

upon the question. The programme before the country was that there should be a conference of the whole Empire and until that took place and we knew what the Colonies were prepared to offer us, and how far we could meet them, the question could not be before the country. Hon. Members opposite appeared to have fiscal reform on the brain to such an extent as to be unable to understand plain English or to take an intelligent view of anybody's opinions—except their own. No more plain English could be spoken than that spoken by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham at St. Helen's. It was absolutely clear that the conference could not be called until after the next general election. He believed that with few exceptions the Unionist Party was absolutely united in believing that there should be some change of retaliation or otherwise in our fiscal policy. Most of them believed that the terrible destitution and suffering which was daily increasing in this country, at all seasons of the year, was largely caused by the withdrawal of manufactures, and by the opening of mills in foreign countries, taking away the work from our own people. Whether they were right or wrong it was a question which any patriotic man should have thought worthy of consideration with an open mind and fair spirit.

At St. Helen's the other day the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham made perfectly clear what his own opinion was, and he also made it perfectly clear that he would heartily unite in supporting the Ministerial policy of the Prime Minister. That was a policy in which the whole of the Unionist Party might combine with satisfaction. Speaking for himself, he admitted that in times past he had been confused between the two policies but, after reading the speeches last week, he was absolutely satisfied that these two right hon. Gentlemen were working together on the same lines—viz., that this question should be referred to the conference and that there should be absolutely free discussion on the whole subject. For his part he should keep an absolutely open mind until he knew what policy was before the country. They could not

know what policy was before the country until the conference had taken place and they knew what the conditions were. He should, therefore, give his most hearty support to the Leader of the House, as he considered his policy and that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham were practically and absolutely the same, and one that could be honestly supported by every member of the Unionist Party.

MR. CHURCHILL said he agreed with the hon. Member when he said that it was quite clear that there would be no Colonial Conference until after a general election. After reading with great attention the speech made by Lord Lansdowne in another place the conclusion was forced upon him that Lord Lansdowne made it clear that His Majesty's Government were unable to resist the arguments, some of them physical arguments, against the summoning of a conference until this country had decided upon the general principle of preference. He hoped the Colonial Secretary, to whom they were all glad to listen when he spoke on matters that came properly within his own sphere, would be able to tell them that the Government did not contemplate, as a matter of definite and practical politics, that there would be any sort of conference before a general election had taken place. Nothing could be more dangerous and more fatal than that while on the one hand, by an arbitrary and improper use of the Septennial Act, the people of this country were prohibited from expressing their opinion on such a vital matter as the taxation of food, a number of well-meaning gentlemen should be brought together from all parts of the Empire to consider detailed methods by which Imperial preference involving the taxation of food might be carried out. No Prime Minister who came with such a policy as that could possibly hope for the support of the House or the country. He confessed that he thought the debate would have served a useful purpose if it only gave to the Secretary of State for the Colonies the opportunity to once for all sweep away the dark, dangerous, and dishonouring suggestion that a Colonial Conference was to be held before the general election. The holding

of such conference could not fail to make the Colonies a mere plank in the platform of one political Party. Anything more disastrous it was impossible to conceive, and he did not believe that even in the desperate straits to which some politicians appeared to be reduced they would allow their desire for political mastery to lead them into a course of action so disastrous to the interests of the Empire to which they were so strongly attached.

He had thought it very odd that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister should have said in the course of the conversation which took place recently that he had forgotten that there was such a thing as an automatic Colonial Conference. There could be hardly any limit to the want of knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman when it was convenient for him not to know any particular subject. The right hon. Gentleman, when speaking on the question of Imperial preference, did not know that there was such a thing as an automatic Colonial Conference. He should have thought there was no other man in this country, who paid the slightest attention to politics, so ignorant. But the oddest statement of all that he had heard the right hon. Gentleman make had been the statement that in the whole of these debates on the fiscal question his speeches had been absolutely consistent from beginning to end. It was curious, if the right hon. Gentleman's claim was a just one, that he should have been unable to make his meaning clear to either friend or foe. That was the statement put forward by those who earnestly desired to support him as well as those who did not. During the progress of this tedious controversy the House had seen the right hon. Gentleman supported by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, two Gentlemen whom they knew to be sharply divided on this great question, the first question of the day. Both those right hon. Gentlemen at different times had appeared to be entirely satisfied with the utterances of the Prime Minister, and the question

which occurred immediately to one's mind was which of those two gentlemen was to be the dupe? Which of them, when the whole of this matter had passed into history, would regret the confidence he had placed in the words of the First Minister of the Crown. For one or the other, and possibly both, would have cause to regret the confidence they placed in the right hon. Gentleman.

Very often in the debates which took place in this Assembly it was the object of the Opposition to prove that there was a division of opinion in His Majesty's Government, but no such object animated those who sat on the Opposition Benches with regard to the fiscal controversy. Their object was not now to prove that there was any division between the Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, but to prove that they were united, and, above all, to make it clear that it was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham who was the leader of the Unionist Party, and that his was the programme which would be the official programme at the next general election. The Member for West Birmingham the other day made a speech in which he claimed that the Prime Minister's policy and his policy were the same, and that he was entirely satisfied with the programme put forward by the Prime Minister. That was not remarkable. The right hon. Gentleman was too good a tactician to let it appear that he was at variance with the official governing heads of his own Party. But the significance of the right hon. Gentleman's speech in Lancashire had been greatly increased by the statement of Lord Lansdowne in the House of Lords, that he agreed with the interpretation placed on the speech of the Prime Minister by the Member for Birmingham. That circumstance must be felt to involve increasing menace to those still sitting on the Ministerial side of the House who adhered unflinchingly to free-trade views.

Events had gone a long way towards showing that the reasons which had already induced some hon. Members to separate themselves altogether from the Party opposite and to take the course of moving over to the other side of the

House, a course accompanied by every odious circumstance of abuse, were not light or passing reasons, and that the influences which two years ago threatened to convert the Conservative Party to protection were still dominant on that side. It was somewhat pathetic to see the way in which members of the Unionist Free-Food League had looked for guarantees in the speeches delivered by the Prime Minister, and who had pinned their faith to them who had said, "Surely these are guarantees there is no getting out of. It is quite impossible to modify them." They had always regarded those statements as statements extracted from the Prime Minister owing to the difficulties in which he found himself and to prevent the disruption of his Party. Lately, however, the right hon. Gentleman had declared that he did not feel himself bound by the promises of the Edinburgh speech—that his pledge was not a pledge given to his opponents. They had been accustomed to regard the utterances of the Prime Minister as being in the nature of solemn assurances to the country as a whole. But the right hon. Gentleman went even further, and claimed that it was open to him to say at any time that he had changed his mind. The right hon. Gentleman did not say, "It is open to me at any time to change my mind," but "It is open to me at any time to say that I have changed my mind,"—to produce this when it was needed and that when a change was required. ["Oh!"] Hon. Gentlemen opposite must be their own judges of the faith they should put in their leader, but he would ask those who had fought for free trade in a manner which was recognised by the Liberal Party—he did not suppose that hon. Gentlemen opposite would object to regard free trade as an asset of the Liberal Party—he would appeal to those hon. Gentlemen to consider whether the time had not come when they should come forward more decisively than they had done and take measures with the strongest organised free-trade forces of the country, to make the sacrifices they had hitherto made effective and lasting for the future.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) said that this was one of a long series of dis-

Mr. Churchill.

cussions which began, so far as that House was concerned, exactly two years ago upon the same Parliamentary occasion. All the debates that had taken place had borne a family resemblance, and he knew that members of the Government believed that in circumstances of great difficulty they had taken the best course open to them in giving only carefully-weighed and judiciously-guarded Answers to the Questions that had been put to them. But he had never concealed his opinion that in pursuing that scheme of tactics they made a profound mistake. He did not say a mistake in his interest, or the interest of free trade, or any interest which did not appeal to them as much as to himself, but a mistake in their own interests and in the interest of the great Party they led, and even in the interest of his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham, because he, like every member of the Party, suffered under the impatience with which the country regarded utterances which, whether they ought to be understood and were intelligible or not, were nevertheless not understood, and were interpreted sometimes in one sense and sometimes in another by different sections of opinion. But since the Government believed it wise to follow these tactics he did not wish on the present occasion—it would not be congenial—to censure their judgment on what was, after all, primarily their own business. He would only say how he understood, and he believed he understood it quite correctly, the position which the Government had taken up.

He understood, first of all, that their desire was to resume what was called the power of commercial negotiation, enforced, if necessary, by retaliatory duties. His criticism on that was well known—namely, that they had the power already. Beyond that he did not want to go at the present moment. But with respect to the colonial side of the problem he understood that the Government agreed with every one else, that while they would not actually promise that there would not be any conference during the present Parliament, it would be practically very inconvenient to have a conference on the eve of a general election—that was the language used in another place—and that, therefore, it was exceedingly unlikely, unless,

perhaps, in response to a demand from the Colonies themselves, that there would be a meeting of any conference before the general election. But the Government proposed, supposing they were returned to office, to assemble a conference which should be uncommitting and uncommitted, which should be able to discuss anything of colonial interest, and the conclusions of which should not bind any of the parties to it, unless they chose voluntarily to undertake the necessary obligations.

A criticism was made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean relating to the supposed exclusion from deliberation of the taxation of raw material and the more doubtful exclusion of the taxation of food. As he understood the matter, neither one nor the other was excluded from deliberation. It would be open to the conference to discuss anything—duties on food, duties on raw material, mutual co-operation, or anything else; but when the conference had concluded its labours it would be perfectly open to any one who supported the conference or to the home Government which convoked the conference to say, "We are unable to recommend this proposal to the people of this country for adoption." That was how he understood the proposal for a Colonial Conference. But undoubtedly his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham had, whether inadvertently or not, brought in an element of confusion where none such need have existed by speaking of the programme the Government were to put before the country as including as its first article colonial preference. But a Colonial Conference which was to discuss colonial preference among a great many other things, but which was not to commit any person who supported or took part in it to the adoption of preference, could not be described as a programme including as its first article colonial preference. It was a wholly different proposal. He heard his right hon. friend say he did not see it. The difficulty of understanding was spreading.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It is my noble friend I do not understand.

LORD HUGH CECIL said his right hon. friend knew what he meant if he did not agree with his interpretation of what the Government meant. At any rate, that was how he understood the Government, and so he and a great many more important people had always supported the policy of a Colonial Conference, because it would be very ungracious to reject such a proposal if it were made. It would, in fact, show distrust of the Colonies, and an indisposition to discuss any questions with them.

Without attempting to press the Government unduly, it was necessary for those who supported that proposal to state clearly why they supported it. They supported it without the smallest intention of modifying their opposition to the proposal for the preferential taxation of food. He had never been able to understand why any distinction should be drawn between the taxation of raw material and the taxation of food. It was perfectly true that a small taxation of either would produce only a small effect, but he could not for a moment admit that the effects of the taxation of food were either better or less dangerous than the effects of the taxation of raw material. He would like to ask one Question. He did not think the Government always appreciated why hon. Members asked Questions. It was not to elucidate their own minds. If they wanted to do that they could go and see members of the Government in private when they would be able to discuss matters at length and probably would much better get to the bottom of whatever might be their purpose. The object of asking Questions was that a great many people on whom they depended might understand the meaning of the Government. It was essential, or, at any rate important, for hon. Members, if they were to secure the confidence of Unionist electors, supposing they could do it consistently with principle, to say whether they supported the Prime Minister's fiscal policy, and if so, how far, and to introduce any limitation which conscience might require. They wished to go as far as consistency with principle would allow in support of that policy, but they were firmly opposed to any policy of colonial preference founded on the taxation of

food. Therefore when they were told on authority which, he agreed, did not pledge the Government in the least, but which did carry great weight with the electors, that colonial preference was the first article in the Government programme, they could not escape from the foreboding that that would occasion them difficulty. He was afraid he was uncharitable enough to suspect that that observation was made with that precise purpose.

His right hon. friend had said that he did not wish to be cross-examined on other people's speeches. He did not want to cross-examine anyone offensively, but he did want to ask his right hon. friend a Question which there could be little difficulty in answering, viz., whether he adhered to the Sheffield declaration, upon which numbers of by-elections had been fought, which most of his hon. friends above the gangway had adopted, and which involved no more than this, that the Government were pledged not to propose taxation of food as part of their immediate programme, and therefore, and this was more important, not to propose it during the course of the next Parliament. ["No, no!"] Yes, this Parliament and the next. He was not suggesting that it was a pledge for ever and ever against the taxation of food. When attention had been directed to the double election pledge, he had always thought the people missed the very evident fact that the double election pledge arose necessarily out of the other pledge. It was no new thing. From the moment the Sheffield speech was delivered the Government were pledged not to propose the taxation of food in the next Parliament, and therefore if the conference adopted it they were bound to have a second election in order to keep the Sheffield pledge. That was the point that was of importance to hon. Members. Otherwise how could they go to their constituents and say, "We are perfectly consistent, first, in supporting a free and unfettered conference, and secondly, in opposing the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham for the preferential taxation of food"?

He wanted to make only one other observation. A part of his right hon. friend's Birmingham speech which seemed to him important was the invita-

tion to those Members who did not agree with the policy as he defined it to leave the Party. He noticed that that invitation was echoed by hon. Members opposite. On both sides, it seemed, there was a desire that the Unionist free-traders should change their political adhesion. He confessed to being a little amused. The Liberal Party were anxious that they should depart from their contaminated surroundings, but they were not prepared to take any steps to secure their continuance in Parliament when the rupture took place. Those who were responsible for the elections said, "Well, Liberalism must be considered as well as free trade"; but he thought it was a little unreasonable that they should not also consider Conservatism as well as free trade. But, in fact, Unionist free-traders were not at present, and he hoped they never would be, driven to any such tremendous choice as an alternative between Conservatism and free trade. They hoped to combine the two, and they hoped it all the more because of the evident anxiety of his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham to get rid of them. The right hon. Gentleman wanted, of course, the Conservative Party to be the instrument of his policy. Did he not wish he might get it? Did he suppose that they were not quite as well aware as he was of the great advantage in resisting his policy that membership of the Unionist Party gave them? They were perfectly aware of it. They proposed to remain in the Party, and they proposed to continue their opposition to his right hon. friend until not one bit of his jerry-built structure remained standing. His right hon. friend might be entitled to advise them as to who ought or ought not to be members of the Unionist Party, but certainly not as to who should be members of the Conservative Party.

It might seem surprising, but he began active political work on behalf of the Conservative Party before his right hon. friend was a member of it. The occasion was really an interesting one, because the very first active political work he undertook was to assist in the composition, which was very easy, of a certain political poster. At the time of the general election of 1885, or that which preceded it, it had been said by

certain members of the Radical Party—he was not sure whether by his right hon. friend himself—that the Conservative Party proposed to tax the food of the people. That was one part of the Radical stock-in-trade at the time, and it was vehemently resented as a calumny by the leaders of the Conservative Party, and the late Lord Iddesleigh, then a distinguished leader of the Party, made a speech in which he described it—quoting an anecdote—as “a downright thumping lie.” That was so good a theme for a poster that it was felt a poster should be made, and he was the editor who constructed it. His right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham had changed his opinion, but he, although a much younger man than his right hon. friend, had not changed his. His right hon. friend had succeeded in making that poster out of date to some extent, but although they could no longer say it was a falsehood, they still earnestly wished they could, and he hoped that Unionist free-traders would continue their membership of the Unionist Party until they brought that poster back into fashion again. At any rate, they would not consent to leave the Party at the bidding of one, who, however distinguished a member of it now, was, after all, in his origin, only an alien immigrant.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. LYTTETON, Warwick and Leamington), who was received with OPPOSITION cries of “Another alien,” said: It will not be very becoming in me to follow the latter and more personal part of my noble friend’s speech. I intended on rising to deal more particularly with the appeal addressed to the Government earlier in the debate by the hon. Member for Durham and the junior Member for Oldham with regard to the next Colonial Conference. It has been truly said that the Colonial Conference, which would in the ordinary course assemble in July, 1906, is not in the strict sense of the word an automatic conference, but it is a conference which has been resolved upon by the members of the 1902 conference, and it would, in the absence of any special circumstances, no doubt meet about that time. These conferences have been hitherto ancillary

to meetings on occasions of great national ceremonials, the Jubilee and the Coronation, but in 1902 it was definitely resolved to hold them at intervals not exceeding four years, and so we got a definite period established for such Conferences to meet upon strictly business occasions as distinguished from more or less ceremonial and festive occasions. Both sides of the House will agree that it would be a great pity to interfere, and especially to interfere without any assent of the Colonies, with the definite establishment of these conferences. It would be a pity to lose the definite and stated times of assembling, and especially it would be a deplorable thing from the colonial point of view if these conferences were postponed for any partisan purposes. That being so, I think the House will feel that it would be a very great pity if, by anything done by the present Government, or any Government, apart from the Colonies, there should be any definite postponement a long time beforehand of this Conference.

I do not wish to enter upon the subjects which might come before them, but obviously there might arise before 1906 questions, apart from any commercial issue, of such gravity and importance as to make it necessary or desirable for us to consult the members of the Empire upon them, and I would deprecate profoundly any action by any Government which would postpone a conference already fixed to deal with such topics. It is equally clear that once the conference assembled it would not be in the competence of anybody there to rule out of discussion any subject which any colonial Prime Minister chose to bring up. We meet there as members of equal States. Some months before the conference of 1902, the Prime Minister of New Zealand sent in an important proposition when it was obviously impossible for anybody to have proposed at that conference to have ruled these topics out of order. I should not, speaking on behalf of the Government, on the present occasion like definitely to pledge the Government to postpone the conference of 1906 at all. Certainly no subject which the Colonies chose to bring forward would be ruled out. But the Prime Minister has already

informed the House on two occasions that the Government did not intend to initiate any subject dealing with commercial preference, and he has also pledged himself not to summon any Indian representation to that meeting. Under these conditions I must say I agree with Lord Lansdowne, as I think anybody would who thought over the matter, that it would be extremely improbable that the Colonies would bring up the fiscal question under such conditions. It is not a subject of such an entrancing character, though I do not for a moment dispute its transcendent importance. ["No, no!"] It is not of so appetising a character that men will give the great labour of advancing and formulating propositions upon it when the conditions for their discussion are not the most favourable. I therefore think that it is extremely improbable if the conference meets in July, 1906—not probable at all events—that these matters should be gone into in very great detail. But the last thing the Government desire is to interfere with the periodical meetings of these conferences, and they have said over and over again for the last six months that the conference should take place without any fetters or hampering restrictions whatever.

With regard to the conference of July, 1906, not being present to the memory of the Prime Minister in September last year, I should be much surprised, as a careful student of their speeches, if a single Member on the bench opposite could rise in his place and say he had any knowledge that the conference was to assemble in 1906.

***SIR CHARLES DILKE:** It was made the subject of debate two years ago.

MR. LYTTTELTON: Had the right hon. Baronet been sitting on the front Opposition Bench I might not have given that challenge, but I do not think anybody at that time believed that the conference of July, 1906, had any relevance to what the Prime Minister said.

I have been asked by the hon. Member for Durham what the position of the Government is. I listened to the speech of the Prime Minister and to that which he made a week ago. He attached to that Edinburgh speech a

most definite meaning and he repeats that meaning, and of course that meaning is the policy of the Government. What does it come to? My right hon. friend has said, and has repeated again and again as clearly as it was possible to say it, that the most important and urgent of all questions of fiscal reform was the question of drawing closer the commercial ties between the Colonies and ourselves. I think the actual words were "most important and most urgent." This, of course, places the drawing together of the commercial ties between this country and the Colonies in the forefront of the programme, and places it alongside with the other head of a great fiscal change—retaliation. I have stated exactly to the House what the Prime Minister said, and what everybody understood him as saying, namely, that these two topics, retaliation and the drawing together of the commercial ties of the Empire, are in the forefront as the most urgent and important items of the Government programme.

Then in the second place come the methods by which these ends, if achievable, should be achieved. The methods which we propose for the purpose is after the election to summon a conference. If the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member for Durham had read a few lines further down in the speech of the right hon. Member for Birmingham they would have found that part and parcel of the programme was the holding and assembling of a Colonial Conference. That enables me to deal with the point raised by my noble friend the Member for Greenwich. He has asked, if I rightly understand him, what is the purpose for which the conference will be held? I have always understood, if I have read his speeches aright, that he is in favour of a conference being held. Of course there are people who would go into the conference with different opinions as to what the result is likely to be, but no one will have the slightest doubt that the effect of asking and obtaining a mandate from the people to go into such a conference will be to strengthen the hands of those who are working for this mandate as a means for securing the commercial unity of the Empire. The Government are pledged to ask for a

Mr. Lyttelton.

mandate to go into this conference if we are called to office after the next election. If we fail, of course the whole matter falls to the ground. So, then, the next election will necessarily entail a request by the Government to the country to give them a mandate to enter upon the consideration of these topics, closer commercial relations with the Colonies and retaliation.

This enables me to answer the next Question of my noble friend. He is for the moment assuming, as I am assuming, the success of the Government at the next election. The conference accordingly is called together by the Government, with the mandate from the people to discuss these subjects, and the conference meets for the purpose and discusses questions arising out of these subjects, and among other conclusions he assumes that they may arrive at the conclusion that the taxation or readjustment of taxation upon food might be possible. He asks if it would be competent for the Government to recommend that proposal to the Parliament then sitting, and I say it would not. I have no doubt of that in my own mind, and I should have said that the Prime Minister had made that clear and had placed it beyond doubt. Really, it is only affectation on the part of hon. Gentlemen who doubt it at all. It will be necessary, according to the pledges given by the Prime Minister, for the Government to submit the resolution of the conference, so arrived at, to the people again at a second election. I think the Prime Minister made it equally clear in his speech at the Albert Hall that in the event of the Government failing in that election, all that has been said in regard to retaliation will of course lapse. I trust after what I have said there is no possible ambiguity about the position of the Government.

*MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): I think the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down was inclined to be a little over sanguine when he expressed a hope that he had cleared up all ambiguity. He did give a reply categorically to the Question whether the Government if returned in the next Parliament would consider taxation of food within the

scope of their mandate. But the Question I want to ask—I am sorry to be still in the interrogative mood, but I have no option—is one that has never yet been answered and to which I find no hint or glimmer of an Answer in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman we have just heard. It is this, what is the issue to be submitted to the country at the next election? [Cries of “Oh, oh!” “Hear, hear!” and “What is yours?”] It is not a question of holding a Colonial Conference. A Colonial Conference will be held, we all agree it should be held, but the question in which the country is interested is, are the Government going to ask the electors to give them power and authority to send to that conference as representatives of the United Kingdom men who are authorised to propose, accept, or entertain any proposition for the taxation of the food of the people of this country?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am very reluctant to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but he has dropped something that seems to me important to note. I did not know that it was the intention on the part of himself and his friends, if returned to power, to summon an Imperial Conference for the purpose of discussing these subjects.

*MR. ASQUITH: I did not say anything of the kind. [Cries of “Oh, oh!” “Yes,” “All agreed.”] I know of no such intention. In the ordinary sequence of events I understand a Colonial Conference will in any case be held, and we on this side of the House are as anxious as anybody else that regular and periodical conferences should form part of the permanent machinery of our Empire. But since the right hon. Gentleman is so ready to put a Question to me, perhaps he will be equally ready to answer my question. I repeat the Question I have ventured to put, are the Government going to ask from the country authority to send to this special conference they propose to summon, men who would propose, accept, or entertain proposals for taxation of food? Sooner or later that Question will have to be answered, and I do not see why it should not be answered to-day.

My right hon. friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies has referred to the speech of the Prime Minister at the Albert Hall as free from ambiguity and misunderstanding, but we cannot forget that on the morrow of that speech we had a version of it from the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, who had not only enjoyed the advantage of reading that speech in the papers, but if rumour is not altogether wrong, had had the advantage of frequent private communication with the head of the Government. In that version proceeding from this high authority the day after we are told that the effect of that speech—and the right hon. Gentleman professed to give his interpretation of it—is that colonial preference is the first item in the Unionist programme. I ask again, is that true or not? The two Questions resolve themselves into one, because if colonial preference is, as the right hon. Member for West Birmingham says, the item first in importance on their programme for the next election, it follows that they are going to ask for authority to propose, accept, or entertain resolutions for the taxation of food. That is the point upon which the whole of this discussion turns. Once more, in the interest not of Party, but of the intelligence of the people and in order that we and they may understand the issue on which we are going to fight, I ask the Government to say “yes” or “no” to that plain and simple Question.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: This discussion has now been going on for a number of hours, and the speech just delivered seems to me to illustrate the objection to the course which was adopted when the Leader of the Opposition moved the adjournment of the House and which has been adopted to-day. What was the object with which the adjournment was moved the other night and what is the object of the Opposition this evening? To make an attack upon the head of the Government, to extort from him interpretations not only of his own speeches, but of other people's speeches—the whole thing is absolutely personal. It is perfectly clear that no one but the Prime Minister can give a full and complete Answer to the sort of Questions raised, and why, then, do you put

him on the stage before you put the Questions? Why do you, you who are Englishmen and who have the ordinary notions of Englishmen as to fair play, why do you reserve your Questions, your attack, and your heavy artillery until a period when it is impossible for your opponent to reply?

The Prime Minister said, in answer to the Question which up to that time had been put to him, that he refused to say anything about the interpretation which might have been put upon his speeches by anyone else. I confess I think he is absolutely right, and I, also, have some complaint of the interpretation put upon my speeches and of the way in which their language is altered, no proper, no full quotation being given, so as to hold me responsible—unless I jump up every moment like a jack-in-the-box—not for what I have said, but for what I am supposed to have said. Take the statement of the Leader of the Opposition. He says, and the hon. Member for Durham repeated it, that I am in favour of high duties. Well, when have I said that? The right hon. Gentleman may, as a matter of argument, say that that will be the result of my policy, but he has no right to accuse me of saying what I have not said. The right hon. Member for Durham says—“Oh, the right hon. Gentleman in continuous speeches has pointed out how much better off by almost any test you can apply, are Germany and the United States under very high tariffs than we are.” Yes, but I have never said that that was in consequence of the very high tariffs. What I have said—and I am very glad to have the opportunity of explaining it here—and it is one of the strongest arguments that I can adduce—is to bring forward Germany and the United States to disprove all the statements of hon. Gentlemen opposite, who tell the people that the effect of introducing even a very small general tariff would be to ruin this country and to starve the people. All these statements of the terrible results that would follow are disproved by the fact that where you have not a small but a very high tariff those results do not follow. So far from approving of very high tariffs, I have used strong language on several occasions to express my opinion of such extravagant tariffs

Mr. Asquith.

as exist in the United States, and I have said that in no circumstances could I approve of the application of similar duties in this country. If hon. Members will look at the conclusions recently come to by the Tariff Commission—[*OPPOSITION* ironical laughter]—at all events that Commission has produced a vast amount of valuable evidence, and hon. Members would be less derisive if they were better acquainted with its conclusions—if they look at those conclusions, they will find that the duties which are proposed, and which may be assumed to be in accordance with my views, as I presided when they were unanimously adopted, are very light indeed. In no case do they exceed 10 per cent., and large classes of articles in the cotton, iron, and textile trades would be admitted free. I hope the misunderstanding of my views in regard to high duties will never be repeated after my definite repudiation of them.

My noble friend the Member for Greenwich said, according to my speech at St. Helens, the Prime Minister had mortgaged the Party to the taxation of food. Now where do we stand with regard to the taxation of food? I confess that the Prime Minister's speech was absolutely clear, and that it should not require further elucidation. But I am perfectly willing to repeat my views, of the position of the Government, and my reasons for holding them. I have never expressed this as the opinion of the Prime Minister, but only as my own personal opinion—that whenever you come to discuss colonial preference you will find, not that it is necessary to put taxation on food, but that it will be necessary to transfer some of the existing taxation on food from one article to another. That has been my contention from the first. Everyone understands what is meant—to take off taxation on tea, sugar, and tobacco, and similar objects of large consumption by the poor, in order to put some of that taxation back on another article of food—namely, corn. Now, what is the position of the Government with regard to that? Let me say beforehand, hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to have mistaken that statement of mine as to what might be necessary as a declaration that under all conceivable circumstances

it would be necessary or desirable. I have never said anything of the sort. I have said again and again that you cannot tell what the Colonies will give in return until you meet the Colonies with the intention of ascertaining their views and what they are prepared to offer. I have said that if they were unwilling to give a sufficient equivalent, of course my proposals in regard to the Colonies would fall to the ground. I never asked any supporters in the country to give me their pledge that they would vote for the taxation of food in any circumstances, and I am not going to do it at the general election. What I ask is that they should not close their minds to the possibility of this resort. I want them to avoid the attitude of my noble friend, who I am to take as a stanch representative of the Conservative Party, and who never changes his mind. I do not want them to place themselves in antagonism to a course of policy the advantage of which must depend on information not now before them. When the conference has met, and we know what the Colonies will give and what we are asked to give in return, then it will be time to come to a decision. But is not that exactly what the Government has said, and not only by the mouth of the Prime Minister?

Hon. Gentlemen would be saved a great deal of unnecessary curiosity in regard to this question of the taxation of food and the views of the Prime Minister if they would refer to a speech which was made by the Prime Minister, by an odd coincidence, on the very day that I made my first speech at Birmingham calling attention prominently to this matter. On May 15th, 1903, the Prime Minister addressed a great deputation of Members on this side of the House who protested against the abolition of the corn duties. I am certain that in the course of that speech my right hon. friend spoke of the importance of a closer commercial union with the Colonies, and expressed his readiness to consider any proposals for such a purpose favourably, even though they involved a slight taxation of food. Where were my noble friend the Member for Greenwich and my hon. friend the Member for Durham on that occasion? There is the statement to which they

take so much exception. Their objections now are belated; they ought to have got up then. It is absurd now to say that the thing is new and requires them to move the adjournment of the House and vote against their Party. They give to what has lately taken place an unnatural importance. From the beginning of this matter I believe that the Prime Minister and myself in all essentials have stood upon exactly the same platform. [OPPOSITION cries of "Agreed, agreed."]

The right hon. Gentleman opposite asked whether it was true that the first issue of the Unionist Party at the next election would be colonial preference. This is what the Prime Minister said at the Albert Hall—

"What I have said about what is commonly known as retaliation I say with equal emphasis and far greater feeling on that other great branch of fiscal reform which, while most difficult, is also most important."

There you have a most distinct statement that that question of fiscal reform is the most important.

"What has been asked," the Prime Minister went on, "in respect of this, the greatest, the most important, and, for reasons based mainly on colonial sentiment, the most urgent of all the great constructive problems with which we have to deal?"

The Prime Minister says that commercial union with the Colonies is the most urgent of the great constructive problems with which we have to deal. I interpreted that, and I interpret it still, as meaning that if the Government goes to the country it will put before it in the first place what the Prime Minister has declared to be the most important issue. It may be very amusing to hon. Members to quibble over a slight variation of meaning in the words respectively used by the Prime Minister and myself. They know perfectly well that, although they are engaged in picking all our speeches to pieces, and while it is possible here and there to find a word of difference, they will not find any substantial difference in point of principle between myself and the Prime Minister.

LORD HUGH CECIL: I have found shoals in reading your speeches.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Will the noble Lord put them forward?

Mr. J. Chamberlain.

LORD HUGH CECIL made a remark in reply which was inaudible in the Press Gallery.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The proper place for expressing opinion is in the House of Commons, and I do not know why, when the noble Lord rose formerly and expressed his opinion with great humour and amusement to the House he should have omitted what ought to have been the essential part of his argument. Up to the present time the only point, I think, in which he suggested what I should call a difference of principle between my right hon. friend and myself was that what he had said was inconsistent with the statement that the first object is colonial preference. Now, I have read what he said; and I ask any intelligent, reasonable person whether there is the slightest inconsistency with the words I have read and the statement I made on that occasion.

LORD HUGH CECIL: There is all the difference between considering whether you will do a thing and doing it.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I really cannot follow my noble friend at all. He makes a distinction which to my mind is almost Jesuitical. I will only say in conclusion that, while I do not in the slightest object to the personal attack which my noble friend made upon me—I enjoy the humour of it—I yet think that, considering his determination to remain in this Party, he might avoid making scorn of a colleague in the presence of his opponents. My noble friend says that I am an alien immigrant; but he forgets that for eighteen years this has been the Unionist Party. I think that he went even further and suggested that I was an undesirable alien. I hope that is not the fact; but meanwhile, humbly recognising my very difficult position, I will not venture to advise the noble Lord in regard to his own action.

LORD HUGH CECIL: Will the right hon. Gentleman refrain from advising my constituency?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will not advise the noble Lord. Advice to his constituents is a different matter, and as

a matter of fact I do not remember that I have advised his constituents. But I do not dwell upon that, because I am perfectly ready to advise them. If they ask for my opinion I will tell my noble friend the advice I will give. I should give the same advice as that which, I believe, he gave to the constituents of the hon. Member for Horsham at the time there was a contested election in that constituency. I hope that this debate, at all events, will have had the advantage of giving to hon. Members opposite the information for which they have been so clamorous, and that, after about the twentieth time of repetition, we may hope they will understand it.

MR. RITCHIE (Croydon): I was present throughout the debate; but I should not have risen had it not been for the speech to which the House has just listened. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham has striven his utmost to show that there is no difference whatever between himself and the Prime Minister. I can thoroughly understand the right hon. Gentleman taking that course. Let us see how the matter stands. The right hon. Gentleman says there is no difference of opinion. In my opinion there is one difference which is a very important one. It is whether or not there are to be two elections before the taxation of food shall be placed before the country. The Prime Minister declared at the outset that it was his intention not to make any proposal on this subject until after two elections. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham takes strong exception to that view and has tried to show it is not only unnecessary but unwise, and he has done his utmost to get that part of the Prime Minister's policy eliminated. That very important distinction having been decided against the right hon. Gentleman, he now wishes to cover his defeat by endeavouring to show that on all other essentials his policy is the same as that of the Prime Minister. To my mind, there is a fundamental difference. The right hon. Gentleman declared that the Prime Minister had placed tariff reform in the forefront of his programme. What does he understand by Tariff reform? What he means by tariff reform is what a good many of us

think is protection. Protection pure and simple. The right hon. Gentleman wishes to do away with the imports of manufactured goods.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Oh, no.

MR. RITCHIE: Then he wants to lessen them, and he proposes, in order to do that, that an import duty should be put upon them. That is what I call protection. Everyone knows perfectly well that the right hon. Gentleman's speech from beginning to end has been a speech advocating protection. The right hon. Gentleman has been protectionist throughout. My right hon. friend the Prime Minister, on the other hand, has never advocated protection. The policy of tariff reform as enunciated by him in the many speeches he has made on this subject is quite a different thing. His view is retaliation. Now my view of retaliation I have often expressed. I see nothing inimical to free trade in retaliation. I do not regard retaliation as a policy at all. I regard it as a mere expedient which we might use in times of great difficulty, but I do not see how we could use it against those nations who are the greatest offenders unless we tax food, with which I do not agree. The view of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister is that tariff reform is the power of retaliation; the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham with regard to tariff reform is quite different. If my memory does not play me false I have heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham speak slightly of retaliation.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No.

MR. RITCHIE: I may have been mistaken, but will the right hon. Gentleman suggest that his policy of tariff reform does not go further than retaliation.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No.

MR. RITCHIE: I am speaking to hon. Gentlemen who have heard the speeches over and over again, and I adhere to the declaration that the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member

for West Birmingham is a wider and more important policy than that of retaliation. Then on the question of preferential duties the right hon. Gentleman said that the Prime Minister put preferential treatment in the forefront of his programme. The Prime Minister never said anything of the kind. What he said was that his policy was to call a Colonial Conference. There is a most essential difference, and for the right hon. Gentleman to say there is no difference between the Government policy as enunciated by the Prime Minister and his own is to tamper with the common-sense of the community. I should not have risen to have taken part in this debate, but I could not refrain from rising and pointing out that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham was misrepresenting *in toto* the policy of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he rose in response to the challenge of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, who called upon anyone who could find any difference between his policy and that of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister at once to speak or to for ever after hold his peace. There was this difference, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham did not quote the First Lord of the Treasury to prove that he was in favour of preference; he constructed a number of phrases from the speeches of his right hon. friend the First Lord and drew the preferential inference from them. The right hon. Gentleman concatenated one phrase and another, and said this means preference. The answer was plain; there was no question of the policy of preference forming part of the policy of His Majesty's Government. Did His Majesty's Government concur in the possible taxation of food and raw material? No, His Majesty's Government were opposed to any duty either on raw material or on food. That was the declaration of the Government. [An HON. MEMBER: Who said that?] He must remind the House that a Government was a corporate entity, and when a Minister spoke in the name and on behalf of the Government it did not

matter who the Minister was. Two right hon. Gentlemen stated that in that House at that Table—one the President of the Board of Trade, and the other the Home Secretary. Let him not be told that when they spoke on behalf of the Government they were of less weight than the Prime Minister himself. They were all of equal weight and authority, or else there was no Government at all, but only a collection of atoms. Neither retaliation nor the holding of a conference was a policy. They were mere expedients and only contingent expedients.

There was this difference also between the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham and the policy of the Prime Minister: his 10 per cent. duty was to be universal. The right hon. Gentleman's five per cent. on dairy produce was to be levied alike on the just and the unjust, as the rain fell from heaven, whereas the Prime Minister's duties were to be levied only on those who did us injury by refusing our goods. That was the difference, and it was all the difference in the world. Retaliation was contingent, first, upon injury, and secondly, which was more important—upon acceptance by the House. Every proposal for retaliation was to be brought before the House of Commons, and any proposal for retaliation that could secure the assent of Parliament would meet with his heartiest approval. Then, too, the Colonial Conference was contingent on the result of the next general election. If the Government was not returned to power there would be no conference. Thus both retaliation and conference were contingent on the prospects of the next general election, and what those prospects were hon. Members could judge for themselves. Were they not being amused by the meanings attached to words according to the desire of the person who attached them? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham spoke of protection as though it were free trade, while the First Lord of the Treasury occasionally, and the Colonial Secretary almost invariably, spoke of free trade as if it were protection. In fact, the words were made to mean just what

the particular speaker liked. It reminded him of "Alice in Wonderland."

"When I say a word," said Humpty Dumpty, "it means exactly what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make a word mean two different things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "who shall be master?"

For two years this wearying controversy had continued, for two years unsuccessful endeavours had been made to get the question settled in the House; for two years Members had been some amused, others interested, by ambiguous utterances and uncertain pronouncements. There was only one way in which all this could be ended, and that was by an appeal to the country, by the general election which had been too long delayed, and without which it was not possible either for the country to pronounce its opinion, or for this House to regain the dignity which he could not but think it had lost through the way in which it had been treated, and the uncertainties which had been presented to it with regard to the most important question now before the country.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland), in calling attention to the question of motor-cars, said he would not have troubled the House further on the matter but for the fact that the President of the Local Government Board was reported as having said that—

"Although the policy of the Board was not his, but that of his predecessor, he entirely associated himself with all that was being done."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) was understood to dispute the accuracy of the report.

*MR. CATHCART WASON said the right hon. Gentleman was reported in *The Times* as having said that he entirely associated himself with all that was being done. He reminded the House that he recently charged the late President of the Local Government Board with a breach of faith, and after reading the reply of the right hon. Gentleman he was unable to understand upon what he based his fervent denials and declared his (the speaker's) statements to be in-

correct. When the Motor-Car Bill was before the House in 1903, it contained not the smallest provision giving any power whatever to local authorities. An overwhelming opinion was expressed in favour of the local authorities having some control. The right hon. Gentleman admitted having an interview with him and he (the hon. Member) left the room as fully satisfied that the understanding would be given effect to as if he had had a thousand witnesses or a document attested and drawn by highest legal authority. The result of that interview was that in another place Lord Balfour of Burleigh, in moving the necessary words, said he believed they would facilitate the passage of the Bill, and, the words having been inserted, the Bill passed. Those facts were sufficient to prove the accuracy of his statement on the occasion of the recent discussion on the Local Government Board Vote. He left the right hon. Gentleman's room as fully satisfied that a fair and reasonable consideration would be given to the demands of the local authorities as though he had had a thousand witnesses, or had the promise embodied in a document drawn up by the highest legal authorities and duly stamped and signed.

His complaint in regard to the circular issued by the Local Government Board was that those very sections which the right hon. Gentleman told them they could most rely upon had been rendered valueless by the action of the Local Government Board. Section 1 simply re-enacted the common law of England, and the object of inserting that section in the Act at all was to give the local authorities some control over motor-cars. He was aware that this matter would come before the House again upon an early date, and therefore he would be content with simply repeating that he was quite satisfied that no Bill would be satisfactory to the House which did not give more effective control to the local authorities in their own areas. He had not said one word against the motor-car industry, for he agreed that the motor-car had come to stay; but he thought it was a monstrous thing that local authorities should be deprived of all control over their own roads owing to regulations drawn up

in the office of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. This country would never stand the present state of affairs for long. They had got in Hyde Park a speed limit of ten miles an hour, but just outside the Park, owing to the action of the Local Government Board, motor-cars were allowed to go at twenty miles an hour. He was aware that shortly the Act would come up for revision, and he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman had decided to appoint a Committee or a Commission to make some inquiry into the whole matter.

The action of the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor required to be inquired into. The President of the Local Government Board had power to give the local authorities some control in this matter. In consequence of the circular, issued by the Local Government Board, only some fifty-seven applications were made by local authorities under the Act, thirteen inquiries only took place, seventeen withdrew their applications, and in seventeen cases nothing whatever was done. He thought from these figures the right hon. Gentleman would see that it was necessary to give the local authorities some control in the matter. He was not asking that local authorities should have sole control, or that they should be in the position of being able to stop motor-cars in their districts; but at any rate they ought to be able to step in and impose a speed limit in dangerous places in towns and villages, and he protested against the Local Government Board interfering in this matter in the manner in which it had done.

He had received violent letters, not only from his own political supporters, but also from Conservatives, and even from members of the Carlton Club, denouncing the existing state of things. Hon. Members did not appear to take that active interest in this motor-car question which they ought to, because the whole country was up in arms against the present system. Motoring was looked upon as the amusement of the privileged few, and the impression was that everybody must get out of the road when a motor-car was approaching, and that the cars need not stop for anything. If people wished to drive about at a speed out of all reason then they

should bear the cost of it themselves. Many other hon. Members of the House felt just as strongly upon this point as he did himself, and a most bitter feeling against motorists was being created throughout the country. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would do his best to minimise some of those evils before the meeting of the next Parliament in order that they might then proceed with the discussion of the new Motor-Car Act in a much calmer frame of mind than public feeling would allow them to do at the present moment. Under the Order such cars as "heavy motors" were restricted to a minimum speed of eight miles an hour, if fitted with pneumatic, or soft, or electric tyres, and of five miles an hour if fitted with other kinds of tyres. Article VII. of the statutory rules and orders provided that the speed at which the heavy motor-car might be driven on any highway should not exceed twelve miles an hour.

*MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire) said he rose to say a few words on the Scottish Churches case.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) rose to order and asked whether the hon. Member could speak on a Bill now before the House?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member will not be entitled to discuss the Bill, but I gather that the point he wishes to raise is the desirability of pressing forward this particular piece of legislation.

*MR. SAMUEL SMITH said he wished to urge the Government to press on this Bill with great rapidity because it could hardly be realised how great was the feeling in Scotland over the matter. He had never known the feelings of the people so roused as they were in this case by the divorce between law and equity. In fact, it was doing a great deal to destroy the respect for law in Scotland—the most law-abiding part of the Empire—and he feared unless something was done there would be lamentable outbreaks as a result of the acute and strained feeling all over the country and especially in the Highlands. He regretted the Government had included in the Bill

proposals on matters in regard to a change in the constitution of the Established Church. It was reasonable that Churches should have more liberty given them than in the past, especially after the decision of the House of Lords, but at the same time, if the effect was to delay seriously or to jeopardise seriously the chance for settlement in the existing situation, it was a great mistake to put the question of the Established Church constitution in the Bill. He hoped the Government would not permit a reasonable desire to grant a certain amount of latitude to the Established Church to jeopardise a settlement of the exceedingly difficult situation in Scotland which could not be endured much longer.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR, said the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland seemed to have taken an extraordinary course in this debate. He had referred to the debate of last Thursday, in which he charged the Chief Secretary for Ireland with having broken a pledge which he gave to local authorities, when President of the Local Government Board, as to the regulation of the speed of motors in their districts. His right hon. friend's reply was absolutely satisfactory to the House, and now the hon. Gentleman made the same charge. He did not think the hon. Gentleman had warned his right hon. friend that he meant to do so, otherwise his right hon. friend would have been there to reply. He rose not to reply on behalf of his right hon. friend on a matter which, he thought, was disposed of last Thursday, but to answer one or two points raised in connection with himself. The hon. Member had quoted him as having said that he associated himself with all that his predecessor had done. He did not know from what paper the hon. Member was quoting, but an hon. friend who had referred to *The Times* report had been unable to find any words of that kind. What he said last Thursday was that he agreed with his predecessor in considering that Section 1 of the Act afforded the best protection against abuses on the part of motorists rather than any limit of speed—he did not say that he associated himself with everything

that had been done when the Chief Secretary for Ireland was President of the Local Government Board, nor was he in a position to say so, because he would have had to examine every one of the applications made by local authorities for a limitation or restriction of speed and come to the conclusion that his right hon. friend was absolutely right. He did not pretend to have gone through all the cases.

MR. CATHCART WASON said the words he had quoted had actually appeared in the Press.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he did associate himself with the policy of his predecessor in regard to Section 1 of the Act. He gave an assurance last Thursday that he was perfectly prepared to consider every application made to him, and that his desire was, as far as he conscientiously could, to meet the wishes of the local authorities. The hon. Member had also raised the question of the speed of heavy motor-cars. The Answer he gave to a Question put by the hon. Gentleman on that subject was perfectly correct. The hon. Gentleman had not quite apprehended the purport of the Answer. If a motor weighed up to twelve tons one of the axle weights must weigh more than six tons, and therefore the speed must necessarily be eight miles an hour instead of twelve.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory) said he wished to call attention to the policy of the Irish Government in regard to the expenditure from the development grant for the encouragement of industry in Ireland. At the present time large parts of the resources of Ireland were expended on the salaries of official servants who, for the most part, were imported from England. He hoped that industrial enterprise in Ireland would be encouraged, not by word of mouth, but by some assistance from the Agricultural and Technical Education Department. There was another important matter connected with the Department which the right hon. Gentleman of the Chief Secretary must be cognisant of.

Assertions had been made over and over again, which could be substantiated by the most positive evidence, that exceptional treatment was meted out to a certain class of clerks in the veterinary department. To every one of the non-Catholic clerks in that department additions had been made to their salaries, from £130 to the chief clerk down to £30 to the others, while the salaries of the Catholic clerks had actually been reduced to £90 with a promise of an increment of £2 10s. a year. He believed that the salaries of some of them were at present only £97 10s. a year, although these men had been working for ten years in the service of the Crown. What he asked for was an independent investigation into the matter. When Questions were asked by Irish Members they only got stereotyped replies. Like the statements of the police in other cases, the right hon. Gentleman only acted as a gramophone to the Vice-President of the Department. The heads of the Department were the accused parties, and the clerks did not want them to be their judges. What they wanted was an independent investigation in regard to the partisan and sectarian treatment of these men.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.) said that he knew that the Vice-President of the Agricultural and Technical Education Department was as anxious as any one could be that everything should be done for the industrial development of Ireland, and he himself had looked very carefully into the question. The charges made against the Department were unfounded. Everything that the Government could do with the funds at their disposal would be done to encourage and develop the industries of Ireland which were most likely to be profitable and beneficial to the people. In regard to the statement that Protestants were unfairly promoted in the veterinary department to the detriment of Catholics, his Answer must be in the negative. There was no justification for an independent inquiry as suggested as no injustice had been done. He had looked carefully into the facts of the case and he was satisfied the charges

were unfounded. Everything had been perfectly proper, and no injury had been inflicted on any one in the service.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House, at its rising To-morrow, do adjourn till Tuesday, 20th June."—(Mr. A. J. Balfour.)

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) said the principle on which the Resolution which he proposed to move was based was that the lighting of the coast was not the duty of any particular trade but a national duty. The principle upon which the present system was based was that it was the duty of the shipping trade alone to light the coasts of the United Kingdom and Ireland for the benefit of all concerned; that they and they alone should light the coasts. He reminded the House, however, that those who benefited were not merely the owners of the vessels that came to trade with this country but also the owners of the cargoes, the masters, and the crews who navigated the vessels and, above all, His Majesty's Navy. All these various interests benefited by the lighting of the coasts, and, therefore, it was manifestly unfair that the whole cost of lighting the same should be thrown on the shipping trade. If the shipping trade of this country ceased to exist it would still be incumbent on us to light our coasts in order that the safety of those who approached our shores might not be imperilled by the dangers of our coast. The lighting of our coasts was, in fact, a national obligation; a duty which we owed as one civilised nation to other civilised nations, and it devolved upon us to perform that obligation under all circumstances.

This question had been investigated by several Select Committees and those Committees had unanimously pronounced in favour of transferring

Mr. Delany.

the cost of lighting our coasts from the shipping trade to the Exchequer. In 1822 and 1834 Select Committees reported in favour of the principle, whilst in 1845 a Select Committee declared it was essentially a national duty, and they recommended that all expense for the maintenance of lighthouses, floating lights, buoys, and beacons should be henceforth defrayed out of public revenue. In 1858, when this matter was again before the House, in the course of the debate, before a Committee was appointed, Lord Palmerston said the lighting of our coasts was undoubtedly a duty which belonged to the State rather than the individual, and finally a Committee in 1860 declared upon this point that the lighting of our coasts was a high Imperial duty which we owed not only to ourselves but to strangers who came to our shores. The Select Committee in 1900 which sat to inquire into the question of steamship subsidies also recommended that light dues should be abolished, and the Bill that was introduced last year by the hon. Member for Newcastle was read a second time in a House of 284 Members by a majority of twenty-six.

Whenever this question had been discussed in or out of Parliament the conclusions arrived at had been the same, namely, that this charge ought to be a national charge. That contention was not only supported by principle but also by the practice of all the great maritime nations with the exception of Great Britain. France, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Holland, and the United States, all lighted their coasts at the expense of the State and controlled the lighting by a Department of State. Japan, which all must recognise as one of the most progressive of nations, adopted the same principle, whilst even Russia, which was not regarded as progressive in many ways, was more progressive in this respect than Great Britain, she having adopted the same principle. It might be said that although foreign countries did not specifically charge light dues they charged tonnage dues which corresponded with our light dues, but in his view they did nothing of the kind. They corresponded more to our port and harbour charges.

They had to notice that the total charges incumbent upon ships trading in foreign ports were generally less than those charged in the United Kingdom, and he instanced the case of the steamer "Milwaukee," of the Elder, Dempster line, which in course of her trading touched at Hamburg, where the charges were £228 11s. 4d.; Rotterdam, £107 3s.; Antwerp, £198 2s. 3d.; Liverpool, £409 12s.; and London, £497 0s. 10d. This would show what an encouragement it was for vessels to go to the rival ports of the Continent which had got the benefit of these decreased charges.

The lighting of the coasts was in the hands of four authorities, the Trinity House, the Northern Lights Commissioners, the Irish Lights Commissioners, and the Board of Trade. Trinity House was managed by thirteen Elder Brethren, no doubt of great experience in nautical affairs, but whose experience could not be of a modern character when the House recollected that seven members were over sixty-five years of age, two being seventy, two being eighty, and one being over ninety. The Commissioners of Northern Lights were mostly legal gentlemen, who in their vocation could, no doubt, deliver luminous decisions, but whose luminosity was not of that kind which was necessary to light the coast. What they wanted was that the whole administration of the lighthouses should be transferred to the Board of Trade. The charge he had to bring against the existing authorities was that they were wasteful and inefficient. In 1900 an Advisory Committee of shipowners and merchants was appointed by the President of the Board of Trade, and they had come to the conclusion not only that the expenditure was excessive and the service conducted in an inefficient way, but that the entire system was objectionable, and ought to be reformed. During the past year the Advisory Committee had prevented a proposed expenditure of £30,200 by the Commissioners of Irish Lights who thought they should have a new vessel in place of the "Princess Alexandra," which they alleged was worn out, but which it was proved could be repaired at a cost of about £800. There was a complaint also as to the delay of nearly

a year in the publication of the accounts which, moreover, gave altogether insufficient detail. Items of £40,000 and £50,000 were given without any details. Then there was the increased expenditure from year to year on new works, the average of the last nine years having been £91,892. The maintenance of light-houses had also gone up by leaps and bounds, and it was impossible to say why. Whereas the average cost of maintenance per lightship had been under the three general authorities £1,252, the average cost in the case of local lightships was £681 17s. 8d. Whilst a French lightship averaged 8s. 4d. per cubic foot for construction, the English averaged £1 7s. 9d., although the French light service was admittedly one of the best in the world. And there was no reason in the world why we in this matter should not take a leaf out of their book. In point of fact Trinity House had recently ordered a French lightship in order to test it. In 1902 the British total expenditure exceeded the French, Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian combined.

As to the efficiency of the service he did not wish to make indiscriminate charges, but much that he had said pointed to the inefficiency of the service in some respects, at any rate, and he must refer to the gross inefficiency of the Irish lights. The Irish lights were most inaccurate, they did not agree with the chart, and consequently vessels were exposed to the greatest danger. Representations had been made on this subject, but the replies which had been received from the Irish Lights Commissioners were not at all satisfactory. This was a most important matter, involving the safety of life and property, and the question ought to be most seriously taken in hand. He did not think tinkering with the question would be of any use, and the whole system would have to be reformed, root and branch. Shipowners ought not to bear these charges at all, and they were now being called upon to bear a good deal more than would be the case if the lights were more economically administered. He understood that his hon. friend the Member for Sheffield intended to object to this Motion on the ground that it was not

right to carry out this reform at the expense of the National Exchequer. If a certain section of the community had for a long time been penalised, was it wrong that they should be relieved from that injustice? Was his hon. friend prepared to defend a system which was obsolete and antiquated? He was not asking the House forthwith to place these charges upon the Public Exchequer, because there would have to be legislation, and it was a matter which would have to be undertaken by the Government; but they did ask the House to accept the principle, leaving it to the Government to apply this principle when they had a favourable opportunity of doing so. When that opportunity arose, the Government would find very considerable help from a large body of Members of that House. They were all proud of their maritime supremacy, but if something was not done in the direction he had suggested the time might come when that supremacy would be gone. While they were unable to decide what to do in the Port of London, Antwerp had adopted a great improvement scheme, which would quadruple their dock accommodation and give two new channels to the river. That had been done largely at the expense of the State, with some assistance from the municipality. He trusted that the House would not refuse to relieve the shipping trade of these restrictions which prevented them from having a fair chance in competition with their commercial rivals abroad. The House had already pronounced in favour of the Second Reading of a Bill carrying out this object, and he trusted that hon. Members would now decide that the time had come to put an end to this long-standing injustice by adopting this Motion.

SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham), in seconding the Motion, said he had had exceptional opportunities of judging the feeling of the chambers of commerce in this country in regard to this question, and he was able to assure the House that times out of number the Associated Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom had passed resolutions urging the Government to deal with this question, and they had passed such resolutions unanimously.

Mr. Charles McArthur.

Shipowners were determined to keep pegging away at this question until they got this reform conceded. All they wanted was fair play, and they claimed that the light dues were unequal in their operation and unjust in principle. Five Select Committees and one Royal Commission had reported in favour of this Resolution. In consequence of these light dues a very great injustice was inflicted upon British shipowners by the United States of America, where the authorities had retaliated by placing dues upon British shipping, and this country was getting by far the worst of the bargain. American ships contributed to our light dues about £4,000 or £5,000 annually, but British shipowners had to pay to the United States for light dues no less than £50,000 or £60,000 per annum. They had to pay that large sum solely because this country charged light dues upon American ships making use of our ports. This was an affair which interested not only shipowners, but also the public at large. It was a subject which very closely affected the safety of our ships, and therefore it was a most vital question. The mover of this Resolution had urged that the administration of the light dues should be transferred to the Board of Trade. He thought this was an opportune moment for carrying out a reform of that kind, because they were very likely to have shortly a Minister of Commerce, and the duties of the Board of Trade would have to be reorganised.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Lighting of the Coasts of the United Kingdom is a national duty, for the efficient performance of which full departmental responsibility should be assumed by the State and the cost defrayed out of moneys provided by Parliament, instead of, as now, by charges on merchant shipping."—(*Mr. Charles McArthur.*)

**Mr. J. F. HOPE* (Sheffield, Brightside) said he had put his Amendment down entirely upon his own responsibility without the instigation or the knowledge of any official person. The Motion before the House raised interesting points about the incidence of this

charge with which the debate was concerned. It had been assumed that the whole of this charge for light dues fell upon the shipowner. It might be contended that this charge fell upon the shipper in diminution of his profits, or that it fell upon the consumer because he would have to pay more for the goods on account of the extra freights. If it fell upon the shipper then he did not think they needed to discuss the matter, because the burden would not in that case fall upon anyone in this country. If it fell upon the consumer he should be prepared to contend that it was better that the charge should fall upon the consumer of those particular goods than upon the taxpayer at large. It had, however, been admitted both by the mover and the seconder that this charge fell upon the shipping industry, that was upon the shipowners. He would ask why was Parliament, out of Imperial taxation, to be called upon to relieve shipowners of this special burden? This charge on the shipowners was estimated last year by the Chancellor of the Exchequer at about 1s. 6d. per £100 worth of goods carried, but if the whole volume of trade out and home was taken it worked out at 1s. 3d. Surely that was not a very serious burden. The railway industry, both in regard to local rates and the requirements of the Board of Trade, was subjected to far heavier charges than anything which fell on the shipping industry, and the same might be said of many other industries. In his opinion the burden placed upon the coalowner was infinitely heavier than in this case. He agreed that if the Workmen's Compensation Act was extended to the shipping trade that would impose upon shipping a new burden, and the case would be somewhat different.

He was surprised to see the hon. Member for Rotherham supporting this Motion, because he was an ardent advocate of the Rating of Machinery Bill, and he wished to see machinery exempt from rating. He had great sympathy for that proposal, but he did not see how machinery could be exempted from rating without throwing a heavy burden upon other classes such as small householders, and therefore he was opposed to it. Already the heavy non-textile industries were

subjected to other heavy burdens in the shape of local rates whilst shipowners were free from such burdens. Therefore if any relief was to be given it should not be given to the shipowners, but to the heavy non-textile industries. He could not see why the cost of lighting our coasts should be placed upon the Public Exchequer. Would it not be equally as reasonable to place the entire cost of signalling on the railways upon the National Exchequer? Reference had been made to what was done in other countries, but foreign nations did practically what we did in some way or another. The law of reciprocity in this matter in the United States had only been found capable of extension to two countries, namely, Denmark and Holland. All other countries were not admitted to the benefits of the United States reciprocity law because in some form or other, whether in the shape of tonnage or harbour dues, they practically levied the same charges as were imposed in this country in the form of light dues. Therefore, in this matter, the Government of the United States held the view that other countries did not treat them any better than this country.

The demand made by this Motion was that a charge of something like £500,000 a year should be placed upon the shoulders of the public, and he submitted that in the present state of their national finances this was a demand which ought not to be granted. He submitted emphatically that the time had not arrived when anything ought to be done in this matter. The recommendations of the Local Taxation Commission were far more important than this question, because they would confer a benefit upon the ratepayers at large. Taxation at the present moment was high, and it would be very difficult for any Chancellor of the Exchequer to defend the imposition of another £500,000 upon the taxation of this country in view of the urgent requirements of other industries. How could the Chancellor of the Exchequer possibly justify his position before the general body of taxpayers if he acceded to this Motion. He had great admiration for the courage of the right hon. Gentleman, but he did not think he would have the audacity to grant this demand in face

Mr. J. F. Hope.

of the great need for relief from taxation in other more worthy directions. A great portion of these light dues were not paid by the home shipper at all but by the foreigner, to the extent of about 30 per cent. The debate illustrated the inconsistency of human nature, and especially Parliamentary human nature. Much had recently been heard of the necessity for economy, but one looked round in vain for the advocates of economy to oppose this Motion. If the shipping industry asked for a renewal of the Navigation Act he would be inclined to support them, but on the present occasion that support must be withheld. On purely theoretical grounds something might be said for the Motion, but in view of the present state of the national finances it would require a considerable amount of audacity to defend such a proposal before the country. Possibly some day, when the Exchequer was overflowing, when no class complained of overtaxation, and when the navies of all possible enemies were at the bottom of the sea, a proposal of this kind might be entertained, but in the meantime, as the representative of an inland town, he must give it his most strenuous opposition. He begged to move the Motion standing in his name.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out all words after the word 'That' and insert the words 'it is inexpedient, in the present condition of the national finances, to place any substantial burden upon the Exchequer for the relief of a particular section of the community.'"

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Does any hon. Member second the Amendment?

There being no response, the Amendment dropped.

MR. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxeth) pointed out that lighthouses were first introduced by religious communities, and then kept up by philanthropic landowners along the coast; they afterwards became a source of profit, and during various reigns, especially that of Charles II., were granted to different persons as rewards for meritorious services. They

had been a source of profit ever since that time. It was not until 1850 that the Board of Trade were given the control and superintendence of matters relating to the mercantile marine, including the lighthouse service. Practically no other civilised country imposed such a tax as this upon shipowners; it was and ought to be a national charge. There was no more reason why one section of the community should be charged with the lighting of the coasts than there was why one section should be charged with the lighting of the streets. The streets, late at night, were used principally by criminals, policemen, doctors, and legislators. What would be said if these classes only had to bear the cost of lighting the streets? The reason why this burden was allowed to remain on shipping was because that trade which, with its allied industries, was the greatest in the country was not represented on the Treasury Bench. If it had been a question affecting agriculture, Parliament would have turned a much more willing ear to the appeals made, and probably doles would have been given. Why? Because a great number of Cabinet Ministers were much more interested in land than in shipping. When the dying patriarch summoned his sons to his bedside, he said, "Issachar is a strong ass, couching between the two burdens." He thought Jacob must have had in his mind the modern prototype of Issachar—the British shipowner, who was indeed an ass couching between grandmotherly legislation and unjust taxation on the one hand, and foreign subsidised competition on the other. But even that most patient domestic animal would turn, and possibly, if the shipowners emulated the example of the loyal Unionists of Ulster, the hearing of the Government might improve and the appeal be more favourably considered. He would not say a word against the Board of Trade; he only wished they would give more heed to this appeal.

The Navy did not contribute anything to the lighting of the coasts, yet there was every reason why it should. The Navy during manœuvres was a standing menace and source of danger to the mercantile marine, as was seen in the recent disaster in

the Channel. They went steaming about without lights, and yet they paid nothing for the lighting of the coasts. The mercantile marine was not only a national but an Imperial asset. It was the link which bound our Colonies to us, and anything done to weaken it was a serious mistake. We were dependent for our food supplies on our shipping, and there was every reason why that industry should be encouraged, more particularly at the present time, when by foreign subsidised competition freights were not remunerative.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said he did not propose to deal at length with the speech of the hon. Member who had just spoken. For the Government which he supported the hon. Member found terms only slightly less uncomplimentary than for the gentlemen who were his colleagues in the trade which he represented. The hon. Member described the Navy as a menace to the mercantile marine, and the mercantile marine as the greatest link between ourselves and our Colonies. He would just venture to suggest to the hon. Member that were it not for our Navy that link of Empire would be very quickly snapped.

MR. HOUSTON: I agree.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN submitted that it was not wise for shipowners and those who felt the importance of our sea commerce to minimise the necessity of a strong and powerful Navy.

MR. HOUSTON said no one had more admiration for the Navy than himself; he had said nothing derogatory. What he said was that the Navy manœuvring in the dark was a menace to the mercantile marine, and he failed to see how that remark could be construed as derogatory to the Navy.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he was glad to know that the hon. Member and he were at one as to the importance of the Navy.

The mover of the Motion had stated that the lighting of our coasts was a national duty which we could not neglect. That was a principle with which no one would disagree. It was quite obvious that as a great civilised Power, with a comparatively vast seaboard, we were bound to see to the proper lighting of our coasts. It did not follow, however, that for that lighting no charge was to be made either upon foreign ships which sought our coast or upon our own mercantile marine. Even though it were decided at some future time to re-organise the different bodies which now controlled the lighting of the coasts it by no means followed that Parliament would be prepared to place the whole of the cost of the service on the Imperial Exchequer. ["What about the Navy?"] To require a contribution from the Navy would only be another way of making the general taxpayers pay, and, in his opinion, the great service rendered by the Navy to the mercantile marine was a good reason why His Majesty's ships should be exempted from the payment of light dues. The Navy was essential to our national existence; it was doubly essential to the existence of our over-sea trade and the maintenance of our mercantile marine. It rendered enormous services to the mercantile marine in subsidiary ways, such as the charting of the seas, giving notice of danger, supplying information, warning, and advice, which, in his opinion, amply discharged any liability it might otherwise have in the matter of light dues.

It was argued that the practice of all nations was against ours in this matter; that the United States levied light dues on our shipping simply because we levied dues on American shipping, and that, inasmuch as many more British ships went into American ports than American ships came into British ports we, as a nation, were losers by the transaction, and that nothing but our insistence on these dues prevented the American Government from allowing our ships in free of all charges. That was an entire misapprehension. It was well known that considerable pressure was being brought to bear upon the authorities in America to alter their law adversely to the shipping interests in this country, and it was probable that in their determination to

construct again a great mercantile marine the United States would have recourse to these dues and other measures, and that, whatever we might do, we should not be able to secure the remission of the dues. But if the American Government were convinced that in other countries except England the lighting of the coasts was a national charge, how was it that those countries had not received the remission of dues in America which this country was to earn? Only two countries in the world—Holland and Denmark—had yet succeeded in convincing the United States Government that they gave the kind of reciprocity, the absolute freedom, which the United States demanded, and the only port of any size for ships sailing from, which entered the harbours of America without paying dues, was Rotterdam. Only two countries in the world—Holland and Denmark—obtained that remission, which showed that, if light dues were not charged in other countries, there was an equivalent of them under some other name. We might abolish these light dues to-morrow and still we should in no way have qualified for freedom in the American ports. The remission of dues accorded by the American Government was not merely accorded to the ships of the country where no dues prevailed, but it was accorded to all ships sailing from those ports. By remitting these dues they would be remitting a charge one-third of which was paid by foreign vessels. Therefore, if they secured this reciprocal treatment in America a great portion of the advantage would go, not to British ships alone, but to foreign ships sailing from British ports.

Reference had been made to the necessity for developing the Port of London, and a comparison had been drawn between what was now being done at Antwerp and what was being done in the Port of London, and a very gloomy future had been predicted for London unless they awoke to their responsibilities and to the keener competition to which they would be subjected in the future. He would remind the hon. Member for Liverpool that the Government had not been unmindful of the interests of the Port of London, because they had proposed legislation on the subject, although it had not

met with that amount of good will and assistance which was necessary in order to enable it to pass into law. This reference to the Port of Antwerp, if the hon. Member would excuse him for saying so, was really a matter of prejudice like many other questions which had been mentioned in the debate, and it really had no bearing upon the proposition before them. These matters appeared to him to have been introduced to colour the picture, and affect their minds by striking their imaginations, and to put the House generally into a mood to do something without regard to the National Exchequer.

It was said that the management of the lighthouse authorities was wasteful and extravagant. He admitted that if we were establishing a lighthouse authority at this moment it was unlikely that it would be constituted exactly as Trinity House was constituted at present, but the lighthouse authorities of the country had discharged their responsible functions with credit to themselves and to the country. If there was unnecessary delay—and the Board of Trade did not hold that view—he did not believe it would be possible to accelerate the rendering of the accounts by any change in the incidence of the charge or of the authorities who administered the fund. In regard to the complaint that the lighthouse authorities were unnecessarily extravagant in relation to new works, a mere comparison of cost as between one country and another was a very imperfect test of extravagance, our own coast being a very difficult coast to light as compared with that, for example, of France. Local lights being in a more sheltered position than those under the national authorities, it was obvious that the capital cost and the cost of maintenance must be greater in the case of the latter. It would be of use to the Board of Trade if his hon. friend placed such information as he possessed at their disposal to enable them to investigate. He did not underrate the advantage of the Advisory Committee, but the Advisory Committee were not always right. They sometimes declared that certain lights were not necessary when those with more immediate knowledge declared them to be absolutely necessary. He could not help thinking

that the origin of the criticisms directed against the lighthouse authorities was not so much a general dislike of those authorities as the dislike of the shipping community to be called upon to pay lighthouse dues; and that if the dues were transferred to the Exchequer the desire would be not to restrict the lights, but to multiply them at every point around the coast. His opinion, after hearing the case presented to him against the present lighthouse authorities, was that whatever they might say as to the anomalies of their constitution, it could not be contended that they had done their work otherwise than well. With the experience he had had of Government administration and of the kind of pressure that was brought by local and sectional interests upon Government Departments for increased expenditure, and upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer for grants from the public purse, he could not believe for one moment that if this charge were transferred to public expenditure there would be any economy secured; on the contrary, he believed that there would be a great increase in the cost.

He did not agree with hon. Members who had spoken that this was an unfair burden to impose upon the shipping industry. He did not believe that a small House like the one he was addressing represented correctly the feeling of the country upon this question, nor did he believe that the House in its corporate capacity would as lightly vote this increased charge upon the taxpayer as those hon. Members who had assembled to support the Motion that evening. During the greater portion of the time since he had been Chancellor of the Exchequer he had been lectured first from his own side, and then by hon. Gentlemen opposite, because the public expenditure was so high, and he had been called upon to cut it down. He had been told that he had no right to allow all these heavy financial responsibilities to be thrown upon the House, that it was his duty to reduce expenditure, and that if he would do that the House would support him. At any rate, speaking for the Government, he could not consent, in the present state of the national finances,

to the transfer to the taxpayers of the country at large of this burden from the shipping industry, which, in spite of bad times now and again, was a prosperous and expanding industry, and if the Motion were pressed to a division he should vote against it.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said that as an economist perhaps he would be allowed to say a few words upon this subject. They had been constantly told in the House and in the Press that the expenditure of the country was too high and that steps should be taken to reduce it. He should have thought that when a proposal was made to place a charge of £500,000 upon the taxpayers of the country they would have had a larger number of Members present to listen to the arguments and to ascertain if there were any just grounds for incurring such a heavy expenditure. At the present moment there was no one present in the House except Members who were directly interested in the shipping industry—[Cries of "No"], so that if the Motion were carried it would be carried by those who, if it were acted upon, would benefit by it. This was a protectionist Motion of the worst kind supported by Liverpool men and others who called themselves free-traders. If this proposal in regard to light dues were accepted, it would mean the placing on the taxpayers of the country a charge to promote the prosperity of a particular industry. He should like to know where they were going to stop if they did that. The shipping industry had, on the whole, during the last twenty years been extremely prosperous and he did not believe it wanted any extraneous aid. Even if it were admitted that industries in a bad state should be helped from national resources, he did not think that the shipping industry was one that came within that category. What was to prevent them from asking for payment of harbour dues next? He sincerely hoped that hon. Members would pause before they committed themselves to expenditure of this kind. No argument whatever had been brought forward in support of the proposal except that it would help the shipowning industry.

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

The expenditure of the country was very great, and it would be inopportune to place on the National Exchequer a charge which the shipowning industry was well able to bear.

MR. RENWICK (Newcastle-on-Tyne) said that, so far from this being an exclusively shipowners' Motion, it had been unanimously supported for years by the Associated Chambers of Commerce, whose members were drawn from all parts of the country, and not from seaports alone. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had put the case very fairly before the House except in one particular. One important point which the right hon. Gentleman did not state was that 50 per cent. of the ships which benefited by our lights never entered British ports, and never paid a penny towards the upkeep of the lights. It was the duty of this country to light its own coasts, and if it did not do so there would be an outcry throughout the whole civilised world. He maintained that it was the duty of every civilised State to light its own coasts, and that was all the shipowners asked the Government to do in regard to our coasts. He did not dispute the statement of the hon. Member for Peckham that the shipping industry had been prosperous during the past twenty years, but he would remind the House that shipowners had come there on former occasions and asked that the State should carry out the duty it ought to perform. They said further that if they must pay these dues they were entitled to representation on the body that carried out the work. Trinity House* was an ancient corporation and out of date. Shipowners who paid the light dues ought to have a voice in the expenditure of the money. They had what was called a consultative representation on the board, but they had no vote. If they were entitled to be consulted, they ought to have a voice as to how the expenditure was to be carried out. A Committee which was appointed to inquire into the subject reported that not more than £60,000 a year should be spent on lighting the coasts—but, notwithstanding that, upwards of £100,000 was paid at present for that purpose.

SIR ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton) said that when this question was last discussed in the House the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that the Royal Navy rendered such service to shipowners that it should not be taxed for coast lighting. The right hon. Gentleman argued that trade had benefited by the Navy, but he seemed to confound trade with the ship-owning interest. They all admitted that general trade had benefited from the service rendered by the Navy; but they maintained that because general trade had benefited the whole nation should contribute the light dues, and that shipowners as a class should not be called upon to pay for these lights. The Chancellor of the Exchequer also stated that although foreign countries might not charge light dues in that shape to shipowners, they charged them indirectly as tonnage dues. The fact was that on the Continent, generally speaking, harbours and docks belonged to the different Governments, and possibly the tonnage dues covered the cost of lighting the coasts. But the tonnage dues did not amount to anything like what the shipowners of this country were called upon to pay for harbour dues alone. It was well known that the docks in this country belonged to private owners and that they had to be managed in such a way as to make a profit, and consequently higher charges were made than at places where the docks were owned, by

the Governments. If the dues were unjust to British shipowners they were also unjust to foreign shipowners, because on the Continent shipowners were not called upon to pay for the lighting of the coasts, except in two or three small countries, such as Sweden and Norway. If we continued to call upon foreign shipowners to pay these dues, their Governments might penalise our ships in their countries. He instanced what our Government had done in regard to the load-line when a communication on the subject was made by the German Government, as showing what could be accomplished by the action of a foreign Government. When the Suez Canal shares were bought by our Government they cost £4,000,000, and now they were worth £33,000,000. It was part of the purchase agreement that the return on the capital should not exceed 25 per cent., but, in spite of that, 28 per cent was being paid. The steamers frequenting the Suez Canal were mostly British, and, therefore, a sum of probably over £500,000 was being exacted from the pockets of the British shipowners in that way. It was unfair to levy light dues on the shipowner alone when all classes benefited by the lighting of the coasts.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 66; Noes, 62. (Division List No. 199.)

AYES.

Banner, John S. Harmood-
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Black, Alexander William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, N E (York, NR, Whitby)
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cheetham, John Frederick
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cremor, William Randal
Delany, William
Denny, Colonel
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward

Evans, Sir Francis H (Maidst'ne
Furness, Sir Christopher
Galloway, William Johnson
Hardie, J. K. (Merthyr Tydvil
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jones, D. B. (Swansea)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawrence, Sir J. (Monm'th)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis

Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lough, Thomas
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
Murphy, John
Nolan, Joseph (Louth, South)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Rankin, Sir James
Rea, Russell

Raid, James (Greenock)
 Renwick, George
 Roe, Sir Thomas
 Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
 Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
 Shackleton, David James

Sullivan, Donal
 Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Tuff, Charles
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. (Sheffield)
 Wilson, Chas. H. (Hull, W.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)

Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
 Charles M'Arthur and Sir
 William Holland.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
 Allen, Charles P.
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manchester)
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. Hicks
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bond, Edward
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worcester)
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
 Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
 Elibank, Master of
 Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
 Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
 Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.)

Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harwood, George
 Higham, John Sharp
 Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
 Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
 Jessel, Captain Herb. Merton
 Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir J. H.
 Keswick, William
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
 Maconochie, A. W.
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Milvain, Thomas
 Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
 Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Percy, Earl
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George

Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Ridley, S. Forde
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs)
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
 Thorburn, Sir Walter
 Tomlinson, Sir W. Edw. M.
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Valentia, Viscount
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A. C. E. (Taunton)
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
 Frederick Banbury and Mr.
 Skewes-Cox.

FOREIGN TRAWLERS REGULATION BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said he begged to move the Second Reading of the Foreign Trawlers Regulation Bill, the object of which was to protect certain portions of our foreshores from trawling. The Bill was not introduced for the purpose of protecting any individual industry, but to provide nurseries for fish, and so increase the food supply of the people of this country. Under the by-law passed some years ago, the Moray Firth was closed against British trawlers, but foreign trawlers still came in and this Bill was intended to put an end to their depredations. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said that the object of this Bill was, curiously enough, exactly the same as that which had just been disposed of. It was protective. It was extraordinary that when a particular industry in which an hon. Member's constituency was interested was affected all his ideas of free trade and free competition vanished. This Bill affected the food of the people.

Notice taken that forty Members were not present; House counted, and forty Members not being present,

The House was adjourned at twenty minutes before Twelve of the clock till To-morrow.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 8th June, 1905.

BARON GRAVES.

Petition of Henry Cyril Percy, Baron Graves of Gravesend in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the election of Representative Peers for Ireland (presented on the 9th day of May last); referred to the Committee for privileges.

INTRODUCED.

Ernest William Baron Grimthorpe having succeeded to the title on the death of his uncle, Edmund Baron Grimthorpe, by virtue of a special remainder in a Patent, dated 17th February, 1886, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Liverpool Corporation Bill. Read 2^a, and committed.

Shepton Mallet Gas Company (Electric Lighting) Bill [H.L.]; Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]—(Pudsey Corporation Tramways Order). Standing Order No. 92 considered (according to order), and dispensed with, with respect to a Petition of the Yorkshire Electric Power Company. Leave given to present the said Petition.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Aberdare Urban District Council Bill; Colne Corporation Bill; North Sussex Gas Bill; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Company Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Municipal Corporations (Merthyr Tydfil Scheme Confirmation) Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments to be considered on Monday the 26th instant.

Gamble's Divorce Bill [H.L.]. Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings before this House on the Second Reading, together with the documents deposited in the Case, returned from the Commons.

Rotherham, Maltby, and Laughton Railway Bill; Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill; Edgware and Hampstead Railway Bill; Charing Cross, Euston, and Hampstead Railway Bill; Heckmondwike Improvement Bill; Andover Lighting and Power Bill; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill [H.L.]; London and North Western Railway Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.—

E. Lauderdale (chairman),
E. Temple,
L. Crofton,
L. Congleton,
L. Rosmead;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Thursday the 29th instant, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill (No. 105); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill (No. 106). Read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill. To be read 2^a on Monday the 26th instant.—
(*The Lord Kenyon.*)

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL ORDER
CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered, That Standing Orders Nos. 92 and 93 be suspended; and that the time for depositing petitions praying to be heard against Private and Provisional Order Confirmation Bills, also the time for depositing Documents relating to any Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, which would otherwise expire during the adjournment of the House at Whitsuntide, be extended to Monday the 26th instant.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday the 26th instant.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Amendment reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday the 26th instant.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday the 26th instant.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill [H.L.]. House in Committee (according to order). Amendments made. Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Monday the 26th instant.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. House in Committee (according to order). Bills reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3^a on Monday the 26th instant.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill. Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday the 26th instant.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SEA FISHERIES (SCOTLAND).

Report to the Secretary for Scotland of a Departmental Committee on the Sea Fisheries of Sunderland and Caithness.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3395. Bulgaria.

No. 3396. Italy (Sicily).

No. 3397. Egypt (Alexandria).

NAVIGATION AND SHIPPING.

Annual statement of navigation and shipping of the United Kingdom, for the year 1904.

ARMY (SOUTH AFRICA).

1. Report of the Committee appointed by the Army Council to consider the question of sales and refunds to contractors in South Africa, together with appendices.

2. Evidence taken before the Committee.

SIGHT TESTS.

Report on the sight tests used in the mercantile marine for the year ended 31st December, 1904 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 2111]).

METEOROLOGICAL COMMITTEE.

Treasury Minute, dated 20th May, 1905, dealing with the constitution of the Meteorological Office.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF SURREY).

Order made by the county council of the county of Surrey altering certain polling districts in the county.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

CRIMINAL CASES (RESERVATION OF POINTS OF LAW) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

LORD ALVERSTONE said the Amendments standing in his name, to which he understood the Lord Chancellor agreed, were for the purpose of rendering the Bill more workable.

Amendments moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 8, after the word 'apply' to insert the words 'within such time as may be fixed by rules of Court'; and in line 22, after the word 'section' to insert the words 'and the Court may make such order as to the custody or admission to bail of the prisoner as they think necessary.'"—(Lord Alverstone.)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): I accept the Amendments.

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2.

LORD ALVERSTONE moved to add, at the end of Clause 2 (Extension of Powers of Court of Crown Cases Reserved), the words in his Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 7, after the word 'convicted' to insert the words 'and if the Court order a retrial of the case, they may make such order as to the custody or admission to bail of the prisoner and the renewal of the recognisances of the witnesses pending the retrial as they think necessary to meet the circumstances of the case.'"—(Lord Alverstone.)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I accept the Amendment.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

LORD ALVERSTONE moved to insert a new clause after Clause 2. He explained that it enabled the Court, where they thought it desirable, to certify, in any case stated under the Crown Cases

Act, 1848, that the prisoner might have legal aid. This power existed in other cases, and it was thought advisable by Judges and members of the Bar that the provision should also be made in cases under the Crown Cases Act.

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 2, to insert as a new clause the words, 'Where it appears to the Court on the hearing of any case stated under the Crown Cases Act, 1848, whether in pursuance of this Act or otherwise, that it is desirable that a prisoner should be represented by counsel, the Court may, if they think fit, certify that the prisoner may have legal aid, and the expenses of such legal aid may be allowed and paid in the same manner as the costs for the prosecution are paid, subject to any rules which may be made for the purpose under the Prosecution of Offences Act, 1879, and to any regulations as to the rates or scales of payment which may be made by a Secretary of State.'"—(Lord Alverstone.)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 3 agreed to.

LORD ALVERSTONE moved to insert a new clause to enable Rules of Court to be made under the Act.

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 3, to insert as a new clause, the words, 'Rules of Court made under Section 17 of the Supreme Court of Judicature Act, 1875, may regulate generally the practice and procedure under this Act.'"—(Lord Alverstone.)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4 agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, in moving the insertion of two new clauses at the end of the Bill, explained that there were certain things which must be done during quarter sessions, and that if they were not so done power to do them was gone. It had been foreseen that if this Bill came into operation without some such provision as that contained in his proposed new clauses there might be a difficulty in allowing persons out on bail.

Amendment moved, to insert the following new clauses—

(A.) "Where a Court of quarter sessions reserve a question of law under the Crown Cases Act, 1848, any recognisances may, subject to any rules made under Section 29 of

the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, be taken out of Court before any justice of the peace, or where any of the parties is in prison before the governor or other keeper of the prison, and the same consequences of law shall ensue as if the recognisances had been entered into before the Court of quarter sessions by which the question of law was reserved."

(B.) "Where on the hearing and determining of a question of law with respect to which a case is stated under the Crown Cases Act, 1848, whether in pursuance of this Act or otherwise, the judgment of the Court stating the case is affirmed, any sentence of penal servitude or imprisonment on the person convicted shall begin to run, in the case of a person admitted to bail from the date of his subsequent reception into prison, and in the case of a person committed to prison under sentence and not admitted to bail from the date on which he is so committed."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to. Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 197.)

BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT, 1882, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ADVERTISEMENTS REGULATION BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Tuesday the 27th instant.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (No. 1) BILL [H.L.].

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

CLOSING OF LICENSED PREMISES (CHRISTMAS DAY) (IRELAND) BILL.

Third Reading (which stands appointed for this day put off to Thursday the 29th instant.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) (No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Tuesday the 27th instant.

COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES.

A question having arisen as to a right to be heard at the Bar, moved that the Question be referred to the Committee of Privileges for consideration and report—(*The Lord Chancellor*), agreed to; and ordered accordingly.

The Earl of Halsbury.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].

Minutes of Evidence, together with an Appendix, laid upon the Table, and to be delivered out.

THE LOSS OF THE STEAMER "WORKFIELD."

LORD MUSKERRY rose to call attention to the recent Board of Trade inquiry held at Cardiff for the purpose of investigating the circumstances attending the loss of the steamer "Workfield;" to ask whether it is a fact that ten firemen and two sailors who alleged insobriety against the captain were retained by the Board of Trade for some length of time antecedent to the inquiry, whilst the chief engineer, who stated before the Receiver of Wrecks that the master was perfectly sober, was allowed to proceed to sea; for what reasons did the Board of Trade not place all the evidence before the Court which they had the opportunity of doing; why was it that the chief engineer and second officer were not retained by the Board of Trade, similarly to the seamen and firemen, to give evidence; and whether, in view of the defective nature of this inquiry, the Board of Trade will quash the judgment arrived at by the Court.

The noble Lord said: My Lords, as Board of Trade inquiries into shipping casualties have earned amongst nautical men a most unenviable reputation for injustices caused by improper procedure and preconceived bias on the part of those sitting on these inquiries, I have felt it necessary to bring forward this case of the "Workfield" inquiry. And I do so principally because, if the facts are as I understand them, the Marine Department of the Board of Trade have conducted their part of the business in a fashion which in the interests of justice cannot be too strongly condemned. Whilst the Department very zealously retained a number of seamen and firemen—amongst whom was the usual admixture of aliens—to support a charge of drunkenness against the captain, they did not exercise a similar power in detaining responsible men whose evidence would have been an emphatic denial of these charges.

I have information to the effect that the chief engineer of the ship stated in his depositions before the Receiver of Wrecks at Cardiff that the master was perfectly sober. I therefore want to know why both he and the second officer of the steamer were not required by the Board of Trade to give the Court of Inquiry the benefit of their evidence. At the Board of Trade inquiry the master strenuously denied the charge of drunkenness, and in his denial he was supported by his chief and third officers. Add to the evidence of the two latter, the evidence—which was not given—of the chief engineer and second officer, and we have all the really responsible men in the ship supporting their commander against the charges levelled at him by a number of irresponsible seamen and firemen. I am not going to criticise, either one way or the other, the decision of the Court that there had been careless navigation, for which the certificate of the captain was suspended for nine months; but I do think it a most scandalous thing that a Court, supposedly judicial in its dealings, should say it was satisfied that the master was drunk and then recommend that he should be tried again—and punished again, I suppose—by a local marine board.

Again, the first inquiry had been in progress for several days when one of the assessors—too old for the work—became indisposed. He then resigned his nautical assessorship and a new inquiry had to be got through before another assessor. The prosecution, therefore, had the opportunity provided them of doctoring the discrepancies in their evidence to the further detriment of the master. The protracted nature of the inquiry has entailed not only great loss of time but considerable expenditure of money to the captain. However, I understand that, fortunately for himself, he was a member of the Merchant Service Guild, which has defrayed his legal expenses. But the principle remains the same, and the Board of Trade should ensure that these inquiries are carried on as expeditiously and inexpensively as possible. The position as it stands now—especially after this "Workfield" case—is that captains and

officers are subjected to a prosecution in respect of which, win or lose, they must pay their own costs. If they are successful in appealing against a decision of a Court of Inquiry they are not allowed their costs, because the Board of Trade are presumed to be absolutely impartial. What a hollow presumption this is, is shown by the way material evidence in favour of the captain of the "Workfield" was withheld from the knowledge of the Court. In view of the most unsatisfactory nature of the whole inquiry, and of the anxiety and loss of time and money to which the captain has been subjected, I hope that the Board of Trade will set aside the judgment of the Court and let the whole thing fall into oblivion—for it certainly reflects no credit on our reputation for strict impartiality and justice.

I would like to draw your Lordships' attention to these punishments that are inflicted on captains and officers of the mercantile marine. Assuming a case where a captain or officer has been found in default, either through neglect of precautions or error in judgment, it is usual to suspend his certificate for a certain period, and in any case he has to pay the costs of the inquiry. Now, the suspension of his certificate for three months, or for nine months, may on the face of it seem a rather simple thing, as the idea would be that at the termination of the period for which the certificate was suspended the punishment would there and then cease; but, unfortunately, that is not the case, and the suspension of the certificate means a punishment during the whole time he remains at sea. It is a serious bar to his getting further employment and is a most serious detriment to him professionally.

If your Lordships would contrast this with the punishment and results of the punishment that would be meted out to an officer in the Royal Navy for a similar neglect of precautions, or error of judgment, you will see what a vast difference there is. The officer in the Royal Navy has not to pay any costs of proceedings; his being reprimanded does not necessarily imply a loss of all future professional advancement; his case will be tried before a Court comprised of his own

fellow officers, and he knows that the trial will be an absolutely fair one, and that he will be afforded every possible chance of vindicating himself. Contrast that with the unfortunate merchant officer who is often tried by those who have no practical experience of the extreme difficulties and disabilities under which he has to carry on his professional duties, and who, as I have said before, has often to contend with a preconceived bias against him on the part of those who are trying his case. My Lords, in the interest of fair play and impartial justice, the Legislature should inquire closely into the proceedings of these Courts with a view to instituting some reform. I beg to put the Questions standing in my name.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Duke of MARLBOROUGH): My Lords, I will not follow the noble Lord into the various points which he has raised in the course of his speech. No doubt, on some future occasion, the noble Marquess the President of the Board of Trade will deal with these matters, if the noble Lord refers to them again. I will confine myself to-day to replying to the Questions which stand in the noble Lord's name on the Paper. The noble Lord asks whether it is a fact that ten firemen and two sailors who alleged insobriety against the captain of the "Workfield," were retained by the Board of Trade for some length of time antecedent to the inquiry. The reply is that the master, and the chief and third officer, and ten seamen were detained for the purpose of the inquiry.

The noble Lord referred to the fact that the chief engineer, who stated before the Receiver of Wrecks that the master was perfectly sober, was allowed to proceed to sea, and asked for what reasons the Board of Trade did not place all the evidence before the Court which they had the opportunity of doing. The reply is that the chief engineer did receive notice that he was detained for the inquiry; but he wrote to say that he had lost all his effects in consequence of the wreck of the ship, and had been out of employment for four months, and that he had then got a very good berth offered him, which in all probability

Lord Muskerry.

meant that he would be employed for several years to come. He, therefore, desired not to appear at the Court and was given permission to sail. His statement was submitted to the Court, but I understand that the solicitor employed for the defence of the captain did not think fit to use that evidence. Inquiries were made with a view of detaining the second officer, but it was found that he was bound on a ship for Baltimore, and no statement could be got from him.

I must remind the noble Lord that all the evidence available was placed before the Court of Inquiry, and that out of the crew of twenty-nine men, sixteen were called as witnesses. The chief officer and the third officer were detained, and they were the two men who gave evidence to the effect that the captain was sober; but the noble Lord will notice in the report of the inquiry that the Court thought their evidence—

"generated the belief in their loyalty to their master rather than in their veracity."

In reply to the third Question—namely, whether, in view of the defective nature of this inquiry, the Board of Trade will quash the judgment arrived at by the Court—I have to say, on behalf of the Board of Trade, that they do not propose to take any further steps in the case, except to direct a local marine board inquiry to be held by the Court into the master's misconduct in drinking to excess.

House adjourned at five minutes past Five o'clock, to Tuesday the 20th instant, a quarter before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 8th June, 1905.

The House met at Two of the clock.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER.

The Sergeant came, and brought the Mace, and laid it under the Table.

Then Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, addressing himself to the Clerk of the House (who, standing up, pointed to him, and then

sat down), acquainted the House that His Majesty, having been informed of the resignation of the right hon. William Court Gully, late Speaker of this House, gives leave to proceed forthwith to the choice of a new Speaker.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.) : Sir Courtenay Ilbert, perhaps as we advance in life, we do not, as a general rule, feel that those duties which devolve upon us by seniority rather than by merit afford unmixed satisfaction in their performance; but from that general rule I would make an exception when any one occupying the position I have the honour to hold in this House is privileged to propose the election of a Speaker. Because, Sir, I hope I may say without vanity that long service in this House and unremitting attention to its work for many years have at least enabled me to form some special judgment as to the arduous duties of the Speaker's office and the singular combination of high qualities which are necessary for their adequate performance. There may have been a time, I do not know, when any blameless country gentleman, having ordinary common sense, of good family and fair presence, may have been considered qualified for the position of Speaker of the House of Commons. If that time ever existed, it has long ago passed away. I think that as the years go by the work of the Speaker grows more arduous and more difficult. I do not mean that our sessions are longer or our hours later than may have been customary in this House in the times of our predecessors. I hope that our orations are not more wearisome now to him who is condemned always to listen to them than they were in past days; I hope it is not more difficult now than it was to reconcile the relevance of our arguments to the question that is before the House, or to restrain tedious or unnecessary repetition of those arguments.

Sir, these were always among the trials of the occupant of that Chair. But I think that in our days we work at a higher pressure and under greater publicity than our predecessors, and that the modern development, I will not say of eloquence, but of the power of talk,

however valuable it may be to our country or to ourselves, has unquestionably added to the difficulties of the Speaker of this House. For, Sir, that development is coupled with a far greater knowledge of the procedure of the House among the great body of Members than was customary in days gone by, with the result that there is greater capacity to question or to criticise the application of our rules to particular instances, perhaps even to apply them to purposes for which they were never intended. That has immeasurably added to the number of occasions on which the judgment of Mr. Speaker requires to be given promptly, accurately, and at a moment's notice upon some absolutely unforeseen question; a judgment which, if wrong, may be a thorn in his flesh throughout his whole occupancy of that Chair. And, Sir, besides this we must remember that we have added, as was said yesterday, greatly to the powers and responsibilities of the Speaker in these later years; for we have conferred upon him those powers of regulating and curtailing our debates which, however just or necessary may be the occasion for their exercise, must always be disagreeable to the minority of the day.

Sir, I think it will be admitted that for these and other reasons the office of Speaker is now not only one of the most important but the most difficult which any subject can be called upon to fill. The qualifications for that office must be high. Our Speaker must be dignified; but at the same time I think it is well for him if he possesses that gift of genial humour which was so noticeable in him whose loss we now regret, and which so often dissipated the clouds of a rising storm. Our Speaker must be firm in maintaining the privileges of this House and in repressing disorder; but he must be kind and courteous to all. He must be prompt and just in action; but he must be patient and tolerant. He must be conciliatory even when reproving; he must be impartial, not only by habit, but by nature, and yet he must in a case of doubt be able to give the benefit of the doubt to the minority of the moment. Sir, these are high qualities to demand in any one; but I think I may say without fear of contradiction that

they have been found in all the four Speakers under whom I have had the honour to serve in this House, and they have been pre-eminently noticeable in the two last distinguished occupants of that Chair.

But if, as I have said, the difficulties of the Speaker's office have increased in our days, there is one point in which I think, thanks to the wisdom and prudence of his predecessors, the position of the future occupant of the Chair will be more easy than it may have been in former times. It has been happily and firmly established by their wise action that there must not be even the semblance of political partisanship or personal predilection in the occupant of that Chair. Never was a more noticeable proof of that given than was given by our late Speaker. We all remember how his election was the occasion of a keen Party conflict, decided by a small majority; yet I am sure that I may appeal with confidence to every one who sits on this side of the House for his assent when I say that, from the moment when Mr. Gully took his seat in that Chair, not by one single word or action could any one of us who voted against him ever have told to what political Party he had formerly belonged. Sir, that is the present position of the Speaker's office, apart from Party, apart from politics, apart from personal favour; and the happy result has been that on two occasions in the past, when the fortune of political conflict has changed the position of Parties in this House, the Speaker elected by a majority belonging to one political Party, having done his work well and faithfully, his high office was not deemed to be among the spoils of the victors at the election, but he was chosen again, with the unanimous support, not merely of his original friends, but of his former opponents. Sir, it is a short step from this to the proposition that the choice by this House of a Speaker should not depend upon political opinion, but upon personal qualifications; and it is on personal not political grounds that I suggest the Member whose name I am about to submit to the House to-day.

It has not been our custom, and I think it has rightly not been our custom,

Sir M. Hicks Beach.

to make the mere occupancy of the Chairmanship of Committees a stepping stone to the Chair of the Speaker. But yet I will venture to say that there is no position in which any Member of this House can so well prepare himself, if otherwise qualified, for the Speaker's Chair, by learning thoroughly and completely the rules and procedure of this House, as by the occupancy of the Chairmanship of Committees. Again, it is precisely because the Chairman of Committees or Deputy-Speaker necessarily does not possess the authority, or what I may call the adventitious dignity, of the Speaker himself that success in the office of Chairman of Committees or Deputy-Speaker is a better proof of real capacity for ruling our debates than any proof that can be given in any other way by any Member of this House. Sir, it is my privilege to propose that Mr. James William Lowther do take the Chair of Speaker of this House. He has been a hard-working and respected Member of this House for twenty-two years. During ten of those years, in arduous and difficult times, he has successfully filled the office of Chairman of Committees and Deputy-Speaker. In that office he has shown invariable courtesy to all, never failing good sense, imperturbable good temper, and calmness and coolness of judgment and action in the most difficult circumstances, as all of us have had reason lately to acknowledge. I believe that Mr. Lowther has that evenly-balanced mind which is the first and greatest qualification for the adequate performance of the duties of that Chair. I know that he is imbued with a deep sense of the best traditions of this great Assembly; and I believe that he already possesses the respect and esteem of its Members. In my opinion, in no part of the House could we find any one so well-qualified worthily to fill that Chair; and I trust that the action of this House to-day in this, which I hope I may say is no longer regarded as a Party matter, may be an earnest to him of that confidence and support in the future which we owe it to our own self-respect to give unreservedly to any one whom we may choose to preside over our debates, and without which not only would the position of a Speaker become impossible, but we could

not ourselves adequately perform those duties which we have been sent to this House by our constituents to discharge. Sir, I beg to propose that the right hon. James William Lowther do take the Chair of this House as Speaker.

*SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): Sir Courtenay Ilbert, as one of the oldest Members of this House, I consider it a high privilege to second the Motion which has been placed before this House in terms so felicitous by my right hon. friend. There is no function connected with our proceedings which carries with it so intense a responsibility as that which we perform when we answer the command from the highest authority in the realm and humbly endeavour to pick out from our midst the one Member who we hope and believe will well, truly, and judicially preside over our destinies. It is a mere truism to say that this modern life of ours is carried on at a speed and under a pressure which would astound our ancestors could any one of them awake. Whether we look at our sports, our amusements, or our busy hives of industry, there is ceaseless pressure going on, and it is surely not unnatural that the contagion should spread within the walls of this House.

My right hon. friend has alluded to the vast increase of the business connected with our Assembly; and I think this, at all events, is obvious, that any hon. Member who aspires worthily to occupy that Chair must be prepared to give an unflagging and constant devotion to the very *minutiae* of all our proceedings, whether connected with our Committee work or our more public proceedings, combined with a deep-seated and constant jealousy of our good name as a deliberative Assembly. If it may be truly said that we have just bid farewell to one of the best of Speakers, partly on account, perhaps, of that severe pressure of work to which I have just alluded, and if we ought to be proud, at all events, to think that during the long period of ten years he has maintained to the very full the highest traditions of this Assembly, and if he has, indeed, suffered in health owing to the sacrifices he has made in our interests and for the sustain-

ment of his own high ideal of duty, surely these things should endear his memory to us so long as we live. It may be urged that in the choice of our candidate we ought not to have chosen one who has held office under the Crown; but I pass that possible criticism by without dwelling upon it, because it is obvious that many and good precedents may be found for such a course.

I may urge, I think, that I have some special interest in the career of the candidate we now propose for the acceptance of the House. It was in 1887 that the late Mr. W. H. Smith asked me if I could name to him a Member who could worthily fill the office of Charity Commissioner in this House. I said at once I thought he should try Mr. J. W. Lowther because he had a good head on his shoulders and it would, at all events, be a good opportunity of trotting him out. My right hon. friend has vastly increased his pace since then; and at length, after many years, I find myself doing my humble best to secure his entrance into that Chair and to place him in supreme dominion over us. My right hon. friend has referred in fitting terms to Mr. Lowther's capacity for the high office in which we hope to place him. I shall say but little; it is difficult to speak of a man in his presence; but I must victimise him if only for a few moments while I venture to urge that not only in the course of his special training have we been able to observe his capacity, but in many other ways we have been able to discover that he possesses all the best essentials which cling to the office to which we propose that he should be elected. We have always noticed in him a calm and clear judgment; and we have noticed also, I think, when he has been called upon in times of excessive excitement to give any decision, how deliberate he has been in giving that decision, although it has been perfectly obvious on all occasions that he has a quick brain and is able decisively and at once to come to a conclusion how best to meet any difficulty that may arise with justice to all Members concerned. He also, as has been observed, possesses that calm and equable temper which is always a necessity for the occupant of that Chair.

He likewise possesses courage and determination, and there is every evidence that he has the keenest desire not only to maintain our rights and privileges, but the order of our proceedings. After all, the one point which can be urged in favour of our choice is, I think, a very practical one. It is that for very many years past—some ten years—he has been constantly tried in the balance and never found wanting.

Although it could be urged with perfect truth that in the case of the late Speaker a conspicuous instance has been afforded of the fact that an hon. Member may be chosen from our midst, little known among us, and yet may carry out the duties of that Chair to the fullest satisfaction of this House, nevertheless, I think these things offer no solid reason why we should not proceed, on such a momentous issue as this, on the strict lines of common sense; and surely we are proceeding strictly on those lines if we choose an hon. Member to perform this arduous duty who for so many years has occupied the position of Chairman of Committees. During that period he has proved, has he not? that he possesses every essential that we wish an occupant of the Chair should possess. The private business of this House has increased during late years at a stupendous rate. I was looking the other day at the proceedings when Speaker Denison was appointed in this House in 1857, and Mr. Thornley, who seconded his nomination, said that the chiefest qualification of Mr. Denison was his aptitude for public business. He also stated that some twenty years before that period, when he first entered the House of Commons, the whole private business of this House was conducted by two Committees of forty or fifty Members each, the great majority of whom gave their votes without hearing one word of evidence. During the seventy years which have since passed how vast has been the increase of private business connected with this House! Surely, then, we are making no very bad choice when we ask one who has had ten years of responsibility connected with the private business of this House to take the Speaker's Chair; and we may do so in the full belief that all business, whether public or private,

Sir W. Hart Dyke.

and all the responsibilities which come under his ken, will be performed with perfect and complete success.

I have little more to say except that I am reminded that, I believe, for seventy years this will be the first occasion, if my right hon. friend is elected, when the Party with which I have been so long connected has chosen a Speaker from its midst. As evidence of the extraordinary impartiality of those who for years past have occupied that Chair, I need only call to mind that amidst all the ups and downs, successes, and reverses of the Party with which I have been connected, I do not think that at any time the most acrimonious partisan could with a scintilla of truth have asserted that any of our reverses or difficulties have been caused in the faintest degree by the partisanship or partiality of a Speaker chosen from the other side. No, Sir Courtenay, if our candidate be elected, he will follow the splendid and illustrious line of Speakers who have lived, as it were, in a higher sphere than the Members of this House, a sphere far above our political passions and prejudices, and he will follow predecessors who will surely stimulate him by their example in the work he has to perform.

I have the honour of seconding Mr. Lowther's nomination to that Chair, and I do so in the fullest belief that he will be equal to the duties we are placing upon him. I believe he will soon gain and secure the full confidence of this House. I believe more, Sir, that he will be able to establish what, before all and beyond all, to my mind is the most important thing in a Speaker—that bond of sympathy between the ruler and the ruled, between the President in that Chair and hon. Members, which makes the great mass of the Members of this House feel that, in common with the Chair, they each one of them are trustees of our fame as an Assembly. I believe he will assure this because he will maintain to the very full the impartiality of the Chair. As an old Member of this House may I conclude with an earnest wish and hope that our new Speaker may be spared in health and strength to bear the burden which we are about to place upon his shoulders, and that under his

rule and control this Parliament of ours may continue to be a bright example to all the representative Assemblies of the world.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the right hon. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER do take the Chair of this House as Speaker."—(*Sir M. Hicks Beach.*)

The House then calling Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER to the Chair, he stood up in his place, and expressed the sense he had of the honour proposed to be conferred upon him, and submitted himself to the House.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): Sir Courtenay Ilbert, I rise, in accordance with ancient usage and time-honoured custom, to submit myself to the House. I think the House will feel that this is not an occasion on which it would expect that I should detain it at any length. Nor, indeed, do I feel capable of doing so if I had any such desire. I would like, in the first place, to thank my two right hon. friends for the far too flattering terms in which they have submitted my name to this House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol, if he will pardon my saying so, I have always considered as one of the greatest Parliamentarians whom it has been my good fortune to see in this House during the twenty-two years that I have had the honour to be a Member of it. My right hon. friend the Member for Dartford has already felicitously alluded to the circumstances under which he opened the door of official life to me in the year 1887. I thank him for that act, and I thank him again to-day for the kind terms in which he has submitted my name to this House. I am fully aware, Sir, of the great difficulty, the vast responsibility, of the situation to which they have asked the House to appoint me. I am afraid I cannot plead a lack of experience amongst my other disabilities. Ten years of sitting in that seat which you now occupy, Sir Courtenay, have taught me many lessons; but they have taught me this—that, difficult as the position at times is at the Table, the position at times of the Chair

is still more difficult, and that whatever qualities may be required from the one who occupies the post of Chairman of Ways and Means, far higher qualities are required from him whom the House elects to preside over its deliberations. I can assure the House that I am deeply sensible of my disqualifications for the office. However, my capacity, such as it is, my conduct, I might almost say my character, are well known, I think, to every Member of this House; and if they, after ten years experience of me, choose to raise me from that Chair to the higher one, I can only say that I will place at the disposal of the House the best of my ability, the whole of my strength, and what health is given to me, to carry on the work of the House and of the country. I think I may claim this—whatever my disqualifications may be—that I will yield to no man in this House in my deep regard and respect for the privileges and the independence, for the traditions and memories, of this House, and that if it be the will of the House to place me in the Chair, I will do my best, my uttermost, to maintain them intact as I shall receive them at their hands.

Question put, and agreed to.

The House then having again unanimously called Mr. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER to the Chair, he was taken out of his place and conducted to the Chair by Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH and Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE, and, standing on the upper step, he expressed his sincerest acknowledgments to the House as follows:—

*MR. SPEAKER-ELECT: Before I take the Chair as Speaker of this House I desire to tender to the House my sincerest acknowledgments for the great honour which it has conferred upon me. Perhaps the House will not think it inopportune if I also take this occasion, as I from this instant cease to be Chairman of Ways and Means, to tender to the gentlemen immediately below me my sincerest thanks for the assistance which during the last ten years they have given me in the arduous work at the Table, an assistance generously given at all times. I would also like to thank

hon. Members in all quarters of the House for the confidence and the trust which I believe in a large measure they have reposed in me. I hope nothing I may do in this Chair will ever forfeit that confidence and that trust. I have before me three great examples in the last three Speakers, under whom I have sat in this House, and it will be my earnest endeavour to follow, though I know I cannot emulate or rival, the great examples which they have set me.

Then the Mace, which before lay under the Table, was placed on the Table.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Mr. Speaker-Elect, following in the steps of my predecessors on such occasions, I now rise and in the name so far as I may speak of the House at large beg to offer you our sincerest congratulations upon the honour which the House has bestowed upon you—the highest honour which it is in the power of the House to bestow, and perhaps the highest honour which it is in the power of a Member of this House to attain. In one particular only do I differ from those who have fulfilled this office for your predecessors. They did their best, and did their best most successfully, to obtain for the occupant of the Chair a man of the highest character, ability, and competent for its most difficult duties, but when they offered him their congratulations upon his elevation to the post of Speaker they could not foresee, they had no means of foreseeing except a general inference from the known qualities of the selected Member, whether he had those special gifts which it is necessary for our Speaker to possess. We, Sir, can offer you our congratulations with a larger measure of knowledge than it was in their power to obtain, for we have seen you doing the duty of Speaker or of Chairman of Committees through a long succession of years, and there is not a man in this House who has not been able to form a judgment of your qualifications for the great office which you now fill. That that judgment has been a favourable one, that you have withstood the light that has beaten upon the Chairman of Committees through all

these years, that you have gone through the most trying ordeal which it is possible for a candidate to the Speakership to go through, and gone through that trial unscathed, is, in my opinion, conclusive proof, if proof we require, of your qualifications for the office. Therefore, Sir, it is not only with a heartfelt rejoicing at the unanimous favour which has been shown you by your fellow-Members, but also in a confident and well-founded belief in the success which will attend you in presiding over our debates, that I venture to offer you the congratulation which I now do with the utmost and most heartfelt satisfaction.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Mr. Deputy-Speaker—I beg pardon, the familiar words came to me. Mr. Speaker-Elect, it falls to me to offer you on my own behalf and on behalf of my friends on this side of the House our sincere congratulations. As you yourself have said, and as others of the right hon. Gentlemen who have just spoken have also said, we know you. We know you from experience, and therefore our congratulations offered to you and our expression of confidence in you are not mere words of form. We have a most perfect belief in your absolute impartiality, in your discretion, and in your wise conduct of the business of this Chamber; and I would only add to that that I am sure I can safely promise you our very best support in maintaining at once the dignity and the privileges of this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have to signify the pleasure of His Majesty that the House should present their Speaker on Tuesday, June 20th, at two o'clock, in the House of Peers, for His Majesty's Royal approbation. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER-ELECT thereupon put the Question, which, being agreed to, the House, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 7th June, adjourned until Tuesday, the 20th June, and Mr. Speaker-Elect went away without the Mace before him.

House adjourned at a quarter of an hour before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 20th June, 1905.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

The Right Hon. JAMES WILLIAM LOWTHER, Speaker-Elect, presented.

The usual salutations having been exchanged between the Royal Commissioners (the Lord Chancellor, Earl Waldegrave, and the Earl of Kintore) and Mr. Lowther,

THE SPEAKER-ELECT said: My Lords, I have to inform your Lordships that His Majesty's faithful Commons, in obedience to His Royal command and in the exercise of their undoubted rights and privileges, have proceeded to the election of a Speaker, and their choice has fallen on me. I, therefore, present myself at your Lordships' bar and submit myself to His Majesty's gracious approbation.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords and Gentlemen of the House of Commons, it not being convenient for His Majesty to be present at this time, a Commission has been issued under the Great Seal, commanding us and several other Lords to notify and declare His Majesty's approbation of the choice of his faithful Commons of Mr. James William Lowther to be Speaker, which Commission you shall now hear read.

The Reading Clerk (Mr. E. H. Alderson) then read the terms of the Commission.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Mr. Lowther, we have it in command from His Majesty to declare His Majesty's entire confidence in your talents, diligence, and efficiency to fulfil the important duties of the high office of Speaker of the House of Commons to which you have been chosen by that House; and in obedience to the Commission which has been read, and by virtue of the authority therein contained, we do declare His Majesty's Royal allowance and confirmation of you, Sir, as Speaker of the House of Commons.

MR. SPEAKER: My Lords, I submit myself in all humility to His Majesty's Royal will and pleasure, and if in the discharge of my duties, and in maintaining the rights and privileges of the Commons House of Parliament, I should be led into any inadvertent error, I pray that the blame may be imputed to me alone, and not to His Majesty's faithful Commons.

The SPEAKER then retired.

House adjourned at a quarter past Two o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 20th June, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

The House being met, and Mr. SPEAKER ELECT having taken the Chair;

A Message to attend the Lords Commissioners was delivered by Black Rod.

Accordingly Mr. SPEAKER ELECT, with the House, went up to the House of Peers, where he was presented to the Lords Commissioners for the approbation of His Majesty.

Then the LORD CHANCELLOR, one of the said Commissioners, signified His Majesty's approbation of Mr. SPEAKER ELECT in the name and on behalf of His Majesty.

The House being returned—

Mr. SPEAKER reported, That the House had been to the House of Peers, where His Majesty was pleased by His Majesty's Commissioners to approve of the choice the House had made of him to be their Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I take this opportunity of repeating my acknowledgments to the House for the honour which it has done me and the confidence which it has reposed in me, and of renewing the assurance of my entire devotion to the service of this House.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Shepton Mallet Gas Company (Electric Lighting) Bill [Lords]; Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 246.]

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to — Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill, without Amendment.

Birmingham Corporation Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend Section eighty-two of The Bills of Exchange Act, 1882." [Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, Amendment Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend Section eighty-six of The Supreme Court of Judicature Act (Ireland), 1877." [Supreme Court of Judicature (Ireland) (No. 1) Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under The Gas and Water Works Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Aberystwyth Gas, Haslemere Gas, Hayling Island Gas, Sandiacre Gas, and Stanford-le-Hope Gas." [Gas Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Shepton Mallet Gas Company to supply electricity within their limits of gas supply." [Shepton Mallet Gas Company (Electric Lighting) Bill [Lords].]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the licensing and control of hospitals for disease for the notification of tuberculosis; and to make other provisions for the health of the Sandgate

urban district; and for other purposes." [Sandgate Urban District Council Bill [Lords].]

PETITIONS.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

FALSE STATEMENTS (COMPANIES) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Huddersfield; and Walsall; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (HOURS OF CLOSING).

Petition from Liverpool, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

Petition from Woolwich, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS ASSOCIATION BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (COMPANIES) BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MORTGAGE OF PREMISES BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (TELEPHONE AGREEMENT).

Petition from Grimsby, for annulment; to lie upon the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RATING OF MACHINERY BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

STEAM ENGINES AND BOILERS
(PERSONS IN CHARGE) BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, against; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE MARKS BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT
(1897) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Walsall, against; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS
(*WHITSUNTIDE RECESS*).

The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Whitsuntide Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896:—

1. Trade Reports (Annual Series). Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3398 to 3409.

2. Treaty Series (No. 16, 1905). Copy of Convention between the United Kingdom and Switzerland supplementing Article XVIII. of the Treaty of Extradition of 26th November, 1880. Signed at London, 29th June, 1904.

3. Sugar Convention (Commercial, No. 3, 1905). Copy of Report of British Delegate at the International Sugar Commission, Spring Session, 1905, and Correspondence.

4. Colonial Reports (Annual). Copy of Colonial Report, No. 448 (St. Helena, Annual Report for 1904).

5. Land Settlement Colonies. Copy of Report on the Salvation Army Colonies in the United States and at Hadleigh, England, with Scheme of National Land Settlement, by Commissioner H. Rider-Haggard.

6. London Unemployed Fund. Copy of Preliminary Statement (as on the 14th April, 1905) prepared at the request of the President of the Local Government Board by the Central Executive Committee.

7. Mercantile Marine (Sight Tests). Copy of Report to the Secretary of the Board of Trade upon the Sight Tests used in the Mercantile Marine for the year ended 31st December, 1904.

8. Factories and Workshops. Copy of Report of the Chief Inspector for 1904. Part I. Reports.

9. Historical Manuscripts (Royal Commission). Copy of Report on the Manuscripts of the Earl of Egmont. Vol. I. Part. II.

10. Meteorological Committee. Copy of Treasury Minute, dated 20th May, 1905, dealing with the constitution of the Meteorological Office.

11. Board of Education. Copy of Regulations for the Training of Teachers and for the Examination of Students in Training Colleges.

12. Churches (Scotland) Bill. Copy of Return of Extracts from Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland relating to the Church of Scotland passed in the years 1690, 1693, and 1707, showing the repeals in the Acts of 1693 and 1707 proposed by the Churches (Scotland) Bill.

13. Sea Fisheries (Scotland). Copy of Report to the Secretary for Scotland of a Departmental Committee on the Sea Fisheries of Sutherland and Caithness.

14. Education (Scotland). Copy of Thirty-second Annual Report by the Accountant for Scotland to the Scotch Education Department.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1904-5 (STATEMENT ON PROGRAMME OF SHIPBUILDING, ETC.).

Copy presented, of Statement showing probable effect on the Programme of Shipbuilding, Reconstruction, Repairs, Maintenance, etc., due to the Re-appropriation of Cash Provision, etc. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 195.]

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 449 (Falkland Islands, Annual Report for 1904) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GRADUATED INCOME-TAX.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 11th August, 1904; *Mr. Herbert Samuel*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 196.]

LEAD POISONING IN EARTHENWARE AND CHINA WORKS.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 1st June; *Mr. Cochrane*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 197.]

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY OF SURREY).

Copy presented, of order made by the County Council of the County of Surrey, altering certain Polling Districts in the County [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY BOROUGH OF NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE).

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Newcastle-upon-Tyne dividing certain Wards of the Borough into Polling Districts [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (INCORPORATION OF MERTHYR TYDFIL).

Copy presented, of Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Merthyr Tydfil, dated 6th June, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 16th May; *Mr. Delany*]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland appointing the places at which Examinations for 1905 shall be held [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland determining the maximum number of Centre Superintendents to be appointed for the Examinations in 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland constituting an additional centre of Examination at Newtownbarry for 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Regulations for Evening Schools, Technical Institution, and Schools of Art and Art Classes, from 1st August, 1905, to 31st July, 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

INCOME-TAX (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE).

Copy presented, of Report of the Departmental Committee on Income-Tax, together with an Appendix and Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

Copy presented, of Returns relating to the Council up to 31st March, 1905, with Estimate of Expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1906 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 198.]

TRADE REPORTS.

Copy presented, of Index to Reports of His Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Representatives Abroad on Trade and Subjects of General Interest (with Appendix), 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to

the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended 31st December, 1904, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into. Part II., Reports on Accidents [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (ARMY ADMINISTRATION).

Copy presented, of Correspondence regarding the Administration of the Army in India [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3410 to 3413 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (HYDROGRAPHER'S REPORT).

Copy presented, of Report on Admiralty Surveys for the year 1904 by the Hydrographer [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Inquiry into Charities (County of Wilts). Further Return relative thereto [ordered 9th August, 1901; *Mr. Griffith Boscawen*]; to be printed. [No. 199.]

2. County Court Rules. Copy of County Court Rules, dated 7th June, 1905 [by Act].

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT (KING'S ANSWER TO ADDRESS).

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR acquainted the House that their Address of Wednesday, the 7th day of this instant June, to His Majesty, praying His Majesty "that He will be most graciously pleased to confer some signal mark of His Royal Favour upon the right hon. William Court Gully, Speaker of this House, for his eminent services during the important period in

which he has with such distinguished ability and dignity presided in the Chair of this House; and to assure His Majesty that whatever expense His Majesty may think proper to incur on that account this House will make good the same," has been presented to His Majesty; and His Majesty has been pleased to receive the same very graciously, and has commanded him to acquaint this House that His Majesty is desirous, in compliance with the wishes of His faithful Commons, to confer upon the said right hon. William Court Gully some signal mark of His Royal Favour; but, as the same cannot be effectually granted and secured without the concurrence of Parliament, His Majesty recommends to the House of Commons the adoption of such measures as may be necessary for the accomplishment of this purpose.

* Committee to consider His Majesty's Most Gracious Answer, To-morrow.—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

Public Accounts. That they give leave to Sir Henry Graham, Clerk of the Parliaments, to attend in order to his being examined as a witness before the Committee of Public Accounts.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Gambling in Futures, etc.—Instructions to Delegates at International Conference.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will say what instructions have been given to the delegates attending the International Congress to be held in Rome to raise the question of gambling in futures and options, especially in regard to foodstuffs.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I understand that no instructions were

given to raise these questions. The hon. Member will find that the nature of the delegation was lately made plain by an Answer given by the President of the Board of Agriculture to the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire.

The Aliens Bill.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he expects that the Committee stage of the Aliens Bill will be proceeded with.

(Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.) I am afraid I am not in a position to fix the exact date for taking this stage of the Bill.

Completion of Boat Slip at Glen, County Kerry.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the inquiry into the proposed completion of the slip at Glen, county Kerry, has yet been held; and whether the work will now be proceeded with.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) No opportunity has yet arisen of making a further inspection of this boat slip. The question of carrying out additional works will be considered by the Board at their meeting next month, if in the meantime it should be found convenient to have an inspection made.

Exports of Eggs, Butter, Creamery, Hogs, Cattle, and Oats from Canada to United Kingdom.

MR. BRIGHT (Shropshire, Oswestry): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he can state the exports of eggs, butter, creamery, hogs, cattle, and oats from Canada to the United Kingdom for the first five months of this year as compared with the exports of the same period of last year.

(Answered by Mr. Bonar Law.) The value of the imports into the United

Kingdom from Canada of the under-mentioned articles during the first five months of 1904 and 1905 was as follows:—

	Five months ending May.	
	1904.	1905.
	£	£
Eggs. . . .	3,467	7,350
Butter . . .	51,069	14,216
Cheese . . .	876,155	745,193
Hogs . . .	Nil	Nil
Cattle . . .	579,621	545,471
Oats	62,570	14,275

Cutting of Hair of Mr. Joseph Fox in Durham Gaol.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the reason why Mr. Joseph Fox, of 18, Eldon Street, Darlington, who was recently confined in Durham Gaol for not having sent his children to school, was compelled to have his hair cut in spite of his protestations; and whether he would be willing to consider the question of giving him some compensation if the action of the gaol official was contrary to regulations.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.) This prisoner's hair was cut by the ward officer as it was exceptionally long and hung to his shoulders. He made no objection at the time, but, on the contrary, asked to have his beard trimmed as well. Had he made any objection his hair would not have been cut except on a certificate from the medical officer of the prison that such cutting was necessary for the sake of health and cleanliness. As the prisoner's hair was cut for his own comfort and with his own consent, there can be no question of paying compensation to him.

Charge of Felony against an East End Beerhouse Licensee.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the circumstances connected with a charge of felony brought by a firm of brewers against one of their tenants, the licensee of a beerhouse in the East End of London; whether he is aware that the licensee was prepared to plead guilty before the police magistrate, but, at the request of the brewers, the case was adjourned to enable the licence to be transferred; that the licensing justices refused to transfer the licence until the charge of felony had been disposed of; that at the request of the brewers the charge of felony was reduced to a charge of unlawful receiving under the Police Acts; and that the licensee was convicted of and fined for that offence; and, if so, whether, seeing that the effect of the proceedings was to defeat the operation of the statutory provision which makes a licence void upon the licensee being convicted of felony, he proposes to take any, and, if any, what action in the matter.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.) My attention was drawn to this case last year, and I duly considered it. It had been dealt with by the magistrate according to his discretion, with which I have no power to interfere, and there was no action for me to take in the matter.

Suggested Increase of Maximum Wage for Darlington Postmen.

MR. PIKE PEASE: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will take into consideration the question of raising the maximum wage paid in the post office at Darlington to postmen from the rate of 26s. per week to 28s. per week, on account of the fact that so many perform whole or part time indoor duties of which the major portion is night work.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) There are, I find, no sufficient grounds for raising the maximum pay of the Darlington postmen to 28s. per week.

Conveyance of Afternoon Mails from Londonderry to England.

DR. THOMPSON (Monaghan, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will explain why it is proposed to favour the conveyance of the afternoon mails from Londonderry to England by the four o'clock train *via* Larne and Stranraer, when the mails can be conveyed as expeditiously *via* Greenore by the express train leaving Londonderry at five o'clock; if he is aware that the additional hour's delay in Derry is considered an advantage by the merchants of this city; that the chamber of commerce and other public bodies have passed resolutions to this effect; and that the latter route is more convenient to traders in the counties of Donegal, Fermanagh, Cavan, Monaghan, Derry, and Armagh, whereas the route *via* Larne will benefit only a portion of Derry county, and Antrim.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) I have considered the comparative merits of the two routes (*via* Larne and *via* Greenore respectively) for the mail service from the North of Ireland to England. By the improvement of the service by the Stranraer route, an acceleration of the correspondence for the northern and midland counties of England as well as that for London would be effected, whereas few places besides London would benefit by a despatch *via* Greenore. Under these circumstances, I consider that the interests of the public would be better served by an improvement in the time of despatch by the former route and have made arrangements accordingly. As regards the districts mentioned in the latter part of the Question, I should explain that in any case the expense of establishing direct bags to London from the smaller towns would not be warranted by the amount of correspondence available, but I am considering the question of extending as far as possible to those districts the benefits of the later despatch of the mails by the Stranraer route.

Expenditure on Admiralty Buildings.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, if he will state the entire amount which has been

expended on the Admiralty buildings (including all alterations of the old buildings, all expenditure on the new buildings, architects and surveyors and clerk of the works' fees) since the 1st January, 1887, down to the 31st January, 1905.

(Answered by Lord Balcarres.) The expenditure defrayed by the Commissioners of His Majesty's Works, etc., on Admiralty buildings from 1st January, 1887, to 31st January, 1905, has been as follows:—

Alterations of the old buildings	£	11,514
Expenditure upon the new buildings:—		
	£	
Block I.	167,472	
„ II.	145,988	
„ III.	62,059	
Mall extension	21	
Covered way	329	
	375,869	(including salaries of Clerks of Works)
Commission to Architects and Surveyors	13,169	
		389,038
		£400,552

The above expenditure is exclusive of £64,013 spent upon ordinary maintenance and repairs from 1st January, 1887, to 31st January, 1905.

Risk of Communication of Glanders to Human Beings.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that inquests recently held on a stableman in the Star Omnibus Company's stables, and on Elizabeth Cousins, the wife of a carman, in Pimlico, and a large number of fatal cases in London hospitals in the past two years have shown the increasing risk of glanders being communicated to human beings; and whether he will, in consultation with the Board of Agriculture, take steps by legislation or by administrative orders to deal with this danger.

(Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.) I have seen reports of the inquests referred to; but I am not aware that there has been any large number of fatal cases of glanders in London hospitals in the last two years. The number of human deaths in London from this cause appears to have been four in 1903 and two in 1904.

I am advised that the risk of the disease being communicated from horses to man is not great, and that it does not seem to be increasing. But I think it may be desirable that when an inspector of the local authority, under the Diseases of Animals Acts, receives notice of the occurrence of a case of glanders in a horse he should forthwith give information of the receipt of the notice to the medical officer of the district in which the horse is or was, and I will communicate with my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries on the subject.

Assessment of Licensed Premises.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the difficulties of arriving at the values of licences under Clause 2, Section 2, of the Licensing Act, 1904, he will state whether it is the practice of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to base the valuation of licensed premises for the purpose of estate duty on the assessment of the licensed premises for the purpose of income-tax; or on the assessment for the publican's licence duty, and what number of years purchase of such assessment is

usually taken for alehouse licences and for ante 1869 on beerhouse licences respectively, or the limits of variation in such number of years purchase in either case ; or whether the Commissioners base their valuation on the average yearly takings in the licensed premises ; in which case what is the profit assumed on the takings and the average number of years purchase usually taken for alehouse licences and for ante 1869 on beerhouse licences, or the limits of variation in such number of years purchase ; or, if none of these bases are taken, whether he will state on what the practice of the Commissioners is based ; and whether the Commissioners will publish a Paper showing six actual instances of recent valuations of licensed premises for purposes of estate duty, and explaining the method which was actually taken to arrive at such values.

(Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.) It would not be possible to give any general Answer to the above series of

Questions in any more precise form than that of the statement as to the Inland Revenue Procedure, which was published in House of Commons Paper, No. 155, of 1904. House of Commons Paper, No. 176, of 1890, may also be referred to. To give instances of recent valuations of licensed premises for purposes of estate duty would probably be only misleading, as so much must depend on the nature and amount of an interest passing on death and on the particular circumstances of each case.

Evicted Ryots in the Madras Presidency.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) : To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state how many ryots have been evicted in the Madras Presidency in default of payment of land revenue in each of the last five years ; and what sum has been realised in each year through the sale of land previously in the occupation of the evicted ryots.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.)

	1899-1900.	1900-1901.	1901-1902.	1902-1903.	1903-1904.
Number of defaulting ryots whose holdings were sold - - -	10,179	14,760	10,649	7,756	4,946
Amount realised by sale	Rs. 191,814	Rs. 270,652	Rs. 152,433	Rs. 133,678	Rs. 97,129

Sale of Salt in Indian Native States.

MR. WEIR : To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the value of the salt sold annually to each Native State of India, with the population of each such State.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) If, as I presume, the Question has reference to the salt supplied in specified quantities and on privileged terms by the British Government to certain Native States under special treaty engagements, I will ask the Government of India to have such a Return prepared.

MR. WEIR : To ask the Secretary of State for India, having regard to the

fact that some of the Native States of India enjoy the right to purchase salt from the Government of India free of duty, whereas other Native States do not enjoy that privilege, will the question of conceding this right to all Native States be considered.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) The right in question exists in virtue of special treaty engagements, as the hon. Member was informed in answer to his Questions of 16th December,† 1902, and 23rd March‡ last. It is not proposed to extend the concession to other States.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxvi., 1331.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxliii., 939.

Sales of Irish Land—Trinity College Leases.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he proposes to introduce legislation this session to give effect to the recommendations of the Trinity College, Dublin, Estates Commission, and particularly recommendation number 5, to enable lessees holding under leases originally made for terms of ninety-nine years under the Trinity College, Dublin, Leasing and Perpetuity Act, 1851, to sell as immediate landlords under the Land Purchase Acts in the same manner as if not less than sixty years of the said terms were unexpired.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Report of the Commission deals with a number of very difficult and complicated questions which require, and will receive, the most careful consideration of the Government. I cannot, at present, give any undertaking to introduce legislation.

Drogheda Plague Inspections—Claim of Dr. O'Keefe.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Local Government Board issued certain temporary regulations respecting plague to the Louth District Council, Drogheda Union, commencing 1st October, 1900, and that Dr. O'Keefe was employed to carry out these orders, who furnished an account for £21 for performing the duties connected with same; and, seeing that the Local Government Board declined to sanction the payment of this amount, and that Dr. O'Keefe took legal proceedings for recovery and obtained a decree with costs, whether the Local Government Board will now make an order apportioning the respective amounts to be paid under this decree by each of the sanitary authorities affected—viz., Ardee No. 1 R.D.C., Louth (Drogheda Union) R.D.C., Meath (Drogheda Union) R.D.C., and Drogheda U.D.C.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The temporary regulations referred to were revoked on the 12th November, 1900. Dr. O'Keefe claimed £21 for twenty-one inspections made between the 14th Febru-

ary, 1901, and the 9th February, 1903. Thirteen of these inspections were made prior to the 1st November, 1901, when no such regulations were in force, and when, therefore, he was not required to inspect vessels from home ports. The regulations were again issued on the last-mentioned date, and were continued in force for a period of six months, during which time he made four inspections. These were the only inspections in respect of which the Board could legally sanction payment, or apportion the cost on the other contributory districts in the Port of Drogheda. The remaining four inspections were made after the expiration of the six months, when there were no special regulations in force. The Louth Rural District Council failed to defend the process in respect of charges for which there was no legal warranty, and they now seek to have the amount of the decree, given through their default, apportioned on the other sanitary districts abutting on the Port of Drogheda, but in the circumstances there is no power to make such apportionment.

Close Time for Irish Fisheries.

COLONEL McCALMONT (Antrim, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the reply of the Fisheries Department (Ireland) to the request of the Conservators of the Coleraine district, to the effect that no alteration in the close time could be made without legislation; whether any alteration has been made in the law since the present close season was fixed; and whether measures can be taken for the proper preservation of districts by having a general close time proclaimed through them.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The Coleraine Board of Conservators approached the Department with a view to a change of close season in their district. The clerk to the board was informed on the 23rd February last that the action of the Irish Fishery Authority in charging all the expenses of a change of close season under 5 and 6 Vic., c. 106, sec. 33, to the Parliamentary Vote instead of to applicants for such changes was questioned in Parliament in the year 1895, and that in view of the possibility that such action

should be held to be *ultra vires*, and of the fact that it had been found in practice to be impossible to carry out the provisions of the section exactly, the holding of close season inquiries had been suspended until a favourable opportunity presented itself in Parliament for introducing legislation to meet the difficulties of the case. On the 13th March last, the clerk was informed that the Department were not prepared to hold the close season inquiry asked for. The provisions of Section 33 above referred to have never been looked upon as workable. It would be undesirable that the same close season should be in force in every part of each district.

Grazing Lands on Lord Trimlestown's Farm, County Roscommon.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Lord Trimlestown offered a large farm of 170 acres in the county of Roscommon to the Estates Commissioners for sale; whether the Commissioners purchased the entire of said farm; and, if so, whether, seeing that a list of suitable occupiers was duly forwarded to the Commissioners, any portion of this farm has been, or will be, given to graziers.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) Certain lands have been offered for sale to the Estates Commissioners by Lord Trimlestown, and the Commissioners have ordered an inspection of the lands with a view to considering the question of purchase and re-sale.

Ardee Union Dispensary Districts.

MR. NOLAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has yet seen his way to ask the Local Government Board (Ireland) to modify their instruction, under sealed order, suppressing one of the dispensary districts in the Ardee Union; whether his attention has been drawn to the fatal accidents which recently occurred at Collon, in which the victims died without relief owing to the removal of the medical officer from the village; is he aware that a special messenger had to be sent by car for a doctor in each case; and whether he

can state to what account the extra expenditure is to be charged.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The Answer to the first inquiry is in the negative. The Board are only aware of one recent fatal accident at Collon, and in that case, according to the statement of the coroner's jury, the dispensary medical officer attended promptly. Expenditure incurred on car hire in summoning medical officers cannot be defrayed out of the local rates unless it has been authorised by the relieving officer.

Militia and Volunteer Submarine Mining Divisions.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to his recent statements as to the future existence of the Militia and Volunteer Submarine Mining Divisions, he will state whether it is now the intention to dispense with them or retain them for service, in whole or in part; if in part, at which ports is it decided to continue their establishment and recruiting, and at which are they to be abolished.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.) No submarine miners will be retained by the Army for submarine mining purposes at any of the naval ports. The question whether these forces can be utilised in connection with the defence of the waterways of commercial ports is still under consideration.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

International Labour Conference and the Match Trade.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, at the recent International Labour Conference, the delegates of His Majesty's Government abstained from assenting to both of the two propositions agreed to, or whether their dissent was confined to the proposals as to interdiction of the use of white or yellow phosphorus to the match trade, agreed to by Germany, France, and

most of the other Powers represented, and made conditional on the assent of all, and on that of Japan; and whether any further steps are contemplated by His Majesty's Government as to the five Articles of the Convention on the industrial employment of women in night work.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): In accordance with the instructions given them, the delegates of this country abstained from voting on either of the resolutions when finally put to the vote of the Conference. As regards the employment of women at night, I understand that the restrictions proposed by the Conference fall short of those already imposed by the English law. The final Report, however, of the proceedings of the Conference has not yet been received, and until I have had an opportunity of considering it I shall not be in a position to make any statement as to the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards the proposals adopted at the Conference.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE gave notice that he would call attention to the subject on the Home Office Vote.

Medical and Dentists' Register.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, having regard to the fact that during recent years twenty names have been struck off the Medical Register by the General Medical Council for infamous conduct in a professional respect, and twelve restored, whilst out of six names removed from the Dentists' Register for a similar cause one has been restored, will he state whether any of those whose names have been restored were originally charged with adultery; and, if any, how many.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: The Answer is "None."

MR. WEIR: Did the right hon. Gentleman obtain his information from the Medical Council? In some cases I

shall be prepared to quote to show he is wrong.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I shall be very glad to receive any information the hon. Member may have, but I have given him the information I have received.

County Court Judgeships.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what has been the amount of the saving to the Exchequer effected annually in the salaries and pensions of the Judges of the County Courts by the absorption of Circuits 10, 34, 39, and 56, since 1872, and of Circuit 46 since 1893; what has been the amount of the saving to the Exchequer effected annually by the abolition, in 1869, of the country district Courts of Bankruptcy and the transfer of the business of that department to the County Courts; whether any remuneration has been given to the Judges of the County Courts in respect of the additional labour and responsibility so imposed on them; what has been the average net annual cost of the whole County Court establishment, including the bankruptcy administration, for the last twenty years, apart from the salaries and pensions of the Judges; and whether any effect has been given to the recommendation of a Select Committee of this House in 1878, that the salaries of the Judges of County Courts should be uniformly raised to £2,000 per annum.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH, Derbyshire, W.): The saving in salaries has been £1,500 a year for each of the five circuits absorbed. The saving in pensions can only be conjectured, as it depends on the number of Judges who would have retired since the absorption took place, but I think that £1,000 a year would not be on unreasonable estimate. I regret that I cannot state whether any, and, if so, what saving has been effected by the transfer to the County Courts of the work of the country district Courts of Bankruptcy. Such transfer has led to a large increase in the remuneration of the County Court Registrars, but it is not possible to say what the expenditure would have been, during the whole period since 1869, if

the transfer had not been effected. No increased remuneration in consequence of this transfer has been given to County Court Judges, but their salaries had been raised from £1,200 to £1,500 a few years before, *i.e.*, in 1865. The average annual cost of the County Court establishment, apart from the salaries and pensions of the Judges, during the last twenty years, was £59,272. Effect has not been given to the recommendation in favour of an increase of the salaries of the Judges, but the County Courts (No. 2) Bill now before Parliament provides for an increase of the salaries of a certain number of Judges, on certain conditions, from £1,500 to £1,800.

Moray Firth Fisheries.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state whether, in view of the continued evasion of Fishery Board by-laws by British-owned trawlers sailing under a foreign flag, the Secretary for Scotland has yet come to a decision with other Government Departments in regard to the recommendation of the Fishery Board that all ports of the United Kingdom should be closed against the landing of fish caught by trawlers in the Moray Firth.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): After communication with other Departments concerned, the Secretary for Scotland is satisfied that legislation in the sense referred to is not at present practicable.

Caithness Crofter's Grievance.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware that Mr. William Bremner, tenant of a croft at Watten, Caithness, on the estate of Sir Ralph Anstruther, was recently evicted without compensation; and, seeing that the whole cost of the improvements and repairs on the holding have been borne by Mr. Bremner or his family, who have been in the occupation of the croft for many years, will he state whether the question of compensation has been considered by the Crofters Commission.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON: A question was raised as to whether Mr. Bremner was a crofter or not, but the question of compensation in this case could not be

considered by the Crofters Commission, because Mr. Bremner withdrew his application on his own motion.

Loans to Scottish Fishermen.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord-Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland has yet considered the desirability of making loans to fishermen in congested districts for the purchase of boats and gear.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON: The matter referred to by the hon. Member is dealt with in the Report of Lord Mansfield's Committee, which has been laid on the Table of the House. The question is engaging the attention of the Secretary for Scotland.

The Military Stores Report.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I have given private notice of a Question on this subject to the Secretary for War. A few moments ago I received a note from the right hon. Gentleman asking that the Question should be postponed till to-morrow, but I think that postponement need only apply to the third part of the Question, which asks what are the intentions of the Department with regard to further investigation. The first two parts of the Question relate to pure matters of fact, which must have been long within the knowledge of the Department. Therefore, I now ask the first two Questions, whether there are any contracts at present in force between the military authorities in South Africa and Meyer (Limited) or Wilson & Worthington, and on whose authority the Press censor in South Africa prevented the publication of criticisms on the contracts for sales and supplies.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The general Question should be addressed to my right hon. friend the Leader of the House. The other two Questions I ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone till to-morrow. [OPPOSITION cries of "Why?"] I only received them yesterday evening. I have no objection to answering them if the hon. Member will give me the ordinary notice. As I said, I only received the Questions

last night, and I asked the hon. Member to postpone them, which I thought he had done. I can give an Answer to the first Question now. There are no contracts with this firm. [AN HON. MEMBER: Two firms.] Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to postpone the Answer to the other Question until to-morrow.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury three Questions, of which, for greater accuracy, I have provided myself with a copy. First, whether any punitive steps have been taken in the case of any officer or other person concerned in the transactions referred to Sir William Butler's Committee; secondly, what judicial action has been taken by His Majesty's Government with a view to the investigation of the whole subject of the dealings in military stores in South Africa or any part of that subject; and, thirdly, what opportunity the right hon. Gentleman proposes to afford the House of a discussion on this matter.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): We placed the papers in the hands of the Director of Public Prosecutions as soon as we had them. He informs us that in those papers there does not appear to be any case for criminal action; that further investigation may produce evidence which would justify criminal action, but such evidence does not appear in the papers of which we are in possession. The censured officers have been relieved from duty. On the whole, I am disposed to think it would not be desirable to try them by way of Court-martial until a further investigation has taken place, and what form that investigation should take must be a matter on which I hope the House will allow me a few more hours for consideration, and an opportunity of consulting with my colleagues. We are only just me, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, after the holidays. There is a Cabinet to-morrow, and I shall be able to give a definite Answer at Question time. My own impression, I may say, distinctly is that we should more quickly—I will not suggest get at the bottom of

the matter—but more quickly see what further steps should be taken if the matter is at once placed in the hands of a Committee of this House. All the officers incriminated are, I believe, in England, and they could be examined before a Committee of this House. Of course the proceedings could be open. I do not want this to be taken as a final Answer, but I believe myself that would be the most expeditious method of procedure and the most satisfactory to the House, who, I think, would like to be brought face to face with the scandals exposed by the Butler Departmental Committee. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will renew his Question to-morrow, when I shall be able to answer with more authority.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think it is reasonable that the right hon. Gentleman should have twenty-four hours more for consideration, but let me point out that the course of appointing a Committee was urged on the Government six weeks ago by my hon. friend behind me the Member for Huddersfield (Sir J. Woodhouse) and refused. Further, I would ask particularly as to the first of my series of Questions. The right hon. Gentleman says that the officers who have been censured have been dealt with in a certain way; but we understood that the whole question was still *sub judice*, and that it was beyond the limits of propriety for any individual, and especially any newspaper, to pronounce an opinion on the conduct of any of the officers concerned. But the right hon. Gentleman appears, or those under him appear, to have already censured certain officers, notwithstanding that there has not been a complete inquiry.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman appears to be under a misapprehension. Perhaps the word "censured" was not felicitously chosen. What I want the House to understand is that certain officers have been severely criticised in the Report. Those officers have been relieved of duty. That is all I meant. With regard to the other Question which the right hon. Gentleman put to me, I had forgotten that the hon. Gentleman opposite had asked for a

Committee six weeks ago; I do not think he did actually ask that.

SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield): Yes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It escaped my memory at any rate; but in any case it would surely have been premature then. Surely we had to wait until the Report was in the hands of the Government and of the House.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): I understood the Prime Minister to say that he had taken steps with regard to certain officers. May I ask whether he has considered whether any steps ought to be taken with regard to the members of the Government responsible?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What I said was that we had laid the papers in the hands of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and that he had reported that as far as he could judge from those papers there is no case for a criminal prosecution. I do not know whether the hon. Member suggests that any member of the Government is open to criminal prosecution.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I still ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has made any inquiry as to the responsibility of those members of the Government who are at the head of this Department and who are responsible to the House and to the country for the whole of these blunders.

[No Answer was returned.]

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Report was printed, published, and circulated with a most remarkable preface by the Secretary of State for War, in which he warned all the world that this was an incomplete and partial inquiry, that the evidence had not been taken on oath, and that for many other reasons it was undesirable that people should discuss it or pronounce an opinion on the conduct of any one concerned. He used the term *sub judice*. I should like to hear from the Prime Minister how he justifies that preface to the Report, and what the circumstances are on which that preface may be supposed to be founded.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Perhaps I can explain the matter to the House. The circumstances are these. The Report was one of a Departmental Committee which, under ordinary circumstances, would have been concluded and furnished to the head of the Department. The Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons was sitting concurrently and contemporaneously with the Departmental Committee, and they desired that an interim Report of the Departmental Committee should be furnished to them on six specific cases before the whole of the inquiry had been concluded. That Report was presented and is incomplete, and is stated to be so by the Committee.

SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE: Not incomplete as to the six cases.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It is perfectly obvious that a great many persons are concerned in these transactions, and they have a right to be heard, and I believe it is in consonance with the sense of justice of the whole House that such an observation should be made. I wanted to explain that this Report, in so far as it concerns the reputation and honour of a number of individuals, is not complete, and that they have not had the opportunity which we desire they should have of stating their case. It was for that reason that I stated, as is the fact, that the inquiry is incomplete. I cannot imagine that any cause could be injured by that statement, and I am certain the cause of fairness will be served by it.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): Why, then, may I ask, have these officers been relieved of their duties?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I can explain that very simply. We have a Departmental Report which tends to throw suspicion, and more than suspicion, on a number of officers who were discharging duties connected with the administration of public funds. We have thought it reasonable, pending further inquiry, which we think necessary, that these officers should be relieved of their duties. We have pronounced no censure and inflicted no penalty on these officers. We shall be most careful to do neither until these

officers have had full opportunity of being tried by whatever tribunal is appointed to try them.

AN HON. MEMBER on the OPPOSITION side: More hanging up.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not know whether the hon. Member proposes that we should punish them without trial. We have done what we believe to be in the public interest.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: At the risk of the appearance of pertinacity, may I ask what is the position of a Select Committee of this House, if appointed? Will it be appointed to examine this case, which has already been incompletely and partially examined? Is the Report of General Butler's Committee to be submitted to the Select Committee, or is the Select Committee to take the place of the Departmental Committee and continue the inquiry in its stead?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should be glad to leave it to the Select Committee to take the course it may think most desirable, and I shall have no desire to restrict the reference to that Committee. But I think if the reference is made very wide, we should put in words to provide, as far as possible, that they should make an interim Report. All I am anxious for is that the thing should not be hung up under the guise of inquiry. On the other hand, I think it is quite clear that there must be an inquiry.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman will give a more explicit answer to-morrow?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): Will it be possible to have such an exhaustive inquiry as is necessary in the public interest without bringing witnesses from South Africa or examining them there?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it is possible that the Committee will find that, if they want to get at the contractors in South Africa, the machinery

of a Parliamentary Committee may be insufficient. But the machinery will certainly be sufficient to examine the officers who are primarily responsible, and I think we should be guided by the Committee as to what further steps should be taken and as to whether it is desirable to see if they could not get the Attorney-General or Director of Public Prosecutions in South Africa to say whether or not there is material for prosecution there. But from such information as has reached me I do not think that that is practicable.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): May I ask whether, in addition to the officers named by the Butler Committee who have been relieved from duty, the Government has also relieved from duty the officer who is responsible for all of them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. I have explained to the House exactly the position.

*MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire): Will the right hon. Gentleman, before he answers to-morrow, recollect that my right hon. friend asked him a three-headed Question, the last part of which had reference to the question of an opportunity for discussion. Will he consider what course he will take, in view of the fact that the hon. Member for Sheffield has a Motion on the Paper?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; I shall be glad to consider such a question; but I hope the House will remember that a debate before we have an inquiry would be rather putting the cart before the horse. What I desire is that there should be an inquiry by a House of Commons Committee, conducted as regards the leading points of the case with sufficient expedition to enable us to debate the subject in the House on adequate information, which I think it is admitted on all sides we have not got at present.

SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE: Has the right hon. Gentleman considered the possible difficulty which he may have in obtaining the evidence in South Africa

which may be necessary to complete the Report?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have by implication answered that Question. The military witnesses are in this country and can give such information as may be necessary for the immediate inquiry.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: What does the Secretary of State for War mean by an interim Report? Does he mean that the Butler Committee is still sitting and is expected to make a further Report?

MR. ARNOLD - FORSTER: That must depend on what is resolved upon by the House of Commons. It would be obviously undesirable to continue its proceedings if any other form of inquiry were embarked upon. In the ordinary course it would have been proper to carry on this Committee to the end. I believe the form of inquiry suggested by the Prime Minister would be much more satisfactory. It would be a comprehensive inquiry, and would give, what the Butler Committee has not given, an opportunity to the persons concerned to cross-examine with regard to the charges made against them.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: But what does the right hon. Gentleman mean by describing the Report as an interim Report? Is not this the final Report as far as the Committee is concerned?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir; that Report was made at my instance—originally at the instance of the Public Accounts Committee. The Public Accounts Committee desired to have a Report from the Committee before they concluded their labours on the branch of the subject which they were investigating. If it had not been for that desire, the Committee would have been sitting now and would have postponed its Report till the whole of the evidence had been received.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): Has the right hon. Gentleman taken it into consideration that it will be almost impossible to report before the end of the session, and that therefore the matter will have to go over till next year?

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MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is very much more expeditious than any other form of inquiry.

MR. WHITLEY: Will the Prime Minister bear in mind, in considering any inquiry, that it is really the War Office and not the officers who are arraigned by this Report?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not agree with the hon. Gentleman. No doubt the organisation dealing with these great contracts was the old organisation. There is now a new organisation, which I hope and believe, in the unfortunate event of a great war again, will be able to deal satisfactorily with these matters. The old organisation was imperfectly adapted to deal with them; but that does not mean that the War Office is arraigned. Those who are arraigned are those who are alleged rightly or wrongly to have been guilty of something which amounts to fraud.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Is it suggested that the War Office ought not to be expected to exercise a general supervision over matters involving six or seven millions of money?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course it should. What I said was that the machinery for the supervision that existed up to a very recent time has proved, under the strain of the largest land war which we have ever conducted, to be imperfect.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: This was after the war was over.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The machinery in operation was the ancient and traditional machinery, which was imperfect. It was inadequate. It has been changed. What the question before the House now is, as I understand it, is another question involving a suggestion of fraud.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: What I asked the Prime Minister on that point—a truly important point for the House of Commons—was whether the right hon. Gentleman is satisfied that the machinery, imperfect as it was, was properly handled by the men who were in charge of it at

the War Office. Will he inquire into that?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That may be a very proper question for the Committee to inquire into.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): I wish to ask whether, having regard to the public feeling in this matter, a Select Committee, if appointed, will report, say, within six months; and whether it will be within the purview of this particular Committee to impeach Ministers.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Ministers cannot be impeached except on a vote of the Houses of Parliament.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): There is a blocking notice which would prevent that.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: However deserved an impeachment might be, the machinery for carrying it into effect is rather clumsy and antiquated. I hope the Report for our guidance will be given not within six months, but long before the present session terminates.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I should like to ask the Secretary of State for War a Question on the point raised by my hon. friend the Member for Carnarvon. It appears that a financial agent for the War Office visited South Africa twice or three times, and it would ease the public mind, independently of any action taken in the direction of appointing a Select Committee, if the reports made by that financial agent of the War Office were made public.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Does the right hon. Gentleman ask me a specific Question on that?

MR. JOHN MORLEY: Yes.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I do not know what the exact form of these reports may be; but I am most anxious that all the details shall be laid before the House, and if the reports could in the ordinary course be laid, I should be desirous to put them before the House. But all the reports were laid before the

Committee itself, and the gentleman to whom the right hon. Gentleman refers was himself examined at great length by Sir William Butler's Committee, and it will be obvious that nothing he has brought back from South Africa by way of information or report has been withheld in the inquiry into this matter.

MR. JOHN MORLEY: I did not mean to charge the right hon. Gentleman for a moment with withholding anything that he thought might be useful in the inquiry; but it would be of great interest to all of us if we knew what view was taken at the War Office by their own officer who twice or three times visited South Africa and investigated these transactions.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that there will be no reluctance on my part to give any information that can be given; but it would be better if this matter were gone into as a whole. I will inquire whether these reports are in such a form that they can be produced, but I think it would probably be seen that all the particulars from his documents were furnished with reference to the whole transaction. I will endeavour to do everything necessary to inform the House.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: I should like to ask whether the stores operations dealt with in the Report of the Butler Committee were carried out by a new department appointed jointly by the War Office and by Lord Kitchener.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Will the Prime Minister tell us to-morrow what Cabinet Minister is responsible for the authorisation of sales and making of contracts in South Africa?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not suppose it is possible for any Cabinet Minister to look into the details of contracts.

MR. LOUGH (interrupting): I do not refer to details, but to the extraordinary principle of making sales and contracts in South Africa. What Cabinet Minister is responsible for authorising them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not quite sure that I understand the hon. Gentleman's Question. If he means what Department has got to deal with these matters, it is, of course, the War Office; and I presume the head of the War Office is responsible for the contracts in the same way as Mr. Gladstone's Secretary for War was responsible for the bent bayonets at Abu Klea.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES repeated his Question whether the Department conducting the stores operations was entirely a new one.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think if the hon. Gentleman wants to ask me Questions about the details of War Office arrangements he had better give me notice.

The "St. Kilda."

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the report of the sinking of the British steamer "St. Kilda" by a Russian cruiser is substantially correct; what action has been taken by His Majesty's Government on behalf of the owners of the ship and cargo; and what is the present position of the master and officers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to my hon. friend I have to say that I fear it is true that the ship to which he refers has been sunk by a Russian cruiser. It would be unnecessary to inform my hon. friend that we took immediate steps in the matter. A correspondence is now going on between us and the Russian Government, of which I should be reluctant to speak at the present moment, because it is not concluded. My hon. friend will realise that His Majesty's Government take a very grave view of the matter, because it is not denied in any quarter that we had received a most specific assurance that no such action would be taken in the future by Russian cruisers.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask whether His Majesty's Government have now received any satisfaction from the Russian Government as to a similar act, the sinking of the "Knight Commander,"

which the right hon. Gentleman himself characterised as a gross outrage; and whether they pressed for satisfaction in respect of that outrage? If not, it is perhaps due to that that this second outrage has occurred.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think the second outrage has any relation to the first, except that the action taken by His Majesty's Government was intended to prevent the frequent repetition of these breaches of international law. If my hon. friend will put a Question to-morrow as to the matter of fact I will endeavour to answer it.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There appears to be some misunderstanding about the business for to-morrow. Can the right hon. Gentleman make any statement on the point?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: After consideration of His Majesty's gracious message respecting the late Speaker, the great bulk of the time will, I have no doubt, be occupied by the Indian Budget.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: And on Friday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: On Friday the Consolidated Fund Bill will be taken.

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said the Bill of which he now had to move the Second Reading was introduced under what was known as the "ten minutes" rule in deference to a strong desire among Members on the Opposition side of the House to become acquainted with its provisions at the earliest possible moment. It was not the procedure he would have preferred, because it did not admit of adequate explanation and defence of a measure of the kind, and without such

explanation prejudices were apt to take root and flourish, which possibly in the light of fuller discussion at the outset might never have been formed at all. A Bill like this was apt to be attacked on the one side because it went too far, and on the other side for not going far enough, and the present Bill was no exception to the rule. His hon. friend the Member for North Islington, as he gathered from the terms of the notice given, would regard the passing of the Bill as little short of a national calamity, and on the other hand he had received representations pressing him to introduce into the Bill Amendments for transferring to boards of guardians the powers proposed to be vested in the local and central authorities, empowering guardians to draw to an unlimited extent on the rates for giving employment without disfranchisement and at full trade-union wages, and finally throwing on the Imperial Exchequer the obligation to defray two-thirds or three-fourths of the expense so incurred. He hoped before he sat down to meet the objections of his hon. friend the Member for North Islington, but first he would deal with the second class of objectors, for he thought they had entirely misconceived the real scope and intention of the measure and the significance of the limitations, without which, in the opinion of the Government, a measure of the kind could not possibly be successful.

The present Bill did not pretend to deal with the whole of the vast and complicated problem known as the "unemployed question," it did not attempt to do more than deal with a part, not altogether an unimportant part, but only a part of that problem, and any attempt to extend its principle to the whole field of unemployment would be foredoomed to disastrous failure. Anybody reading the text of the Bill with attention would see that the object throughout was to assist only a limited class of the unemployed, and even as regarded applicants of that class it was not intended that there should be any kind of obligation to find work for them, as was thrown on guardians to provide relief in cases of destitution. The limited class of the unemployed was defined in Sub-section 3 of Section 1 of the Bill as—

"Honestly desirous of obtaining work but temporarily unable to do so from exceptional

causes over which the applicant has no control."

And the limitation was extended to cases which, in the opinion of the local body to whom application is made, are—

"Capable of more suitable treatment under this Act than under the Poor Law."

He wanted the House to understand the full significance of the definition—the desire was to exclude loafers, work-shyers, intermittent workers whose case was not exceptional, and any workman out of work from fault of his own. The exact interpretation of the words—

"Capable of more suitable treatment than under the Poor Law"

would, of course, depend on the general provisions of the Bill and the regulations to be made by the Local Government Board under Clause 4, and such regulations would include rules his right hon. friend the Member for South Bristol had laid down for the guidance of local and central committees, rules which would exclude distress not due to lack of employment, chronic distress, applicants of bad character, applicants not complying with conditions of residence, preference being given to workmen with established homes and with wives and families. These cases would be dealt with in the regulations, but in addition the Bill contained two general directions which would be found in Sub-section 5 of Section 1. It was there provided that—

"The total weekly remuneration given for any temporary work so provided shall be less than that which would, under ordinary circumstances, be earned by an unskilled labourer for a full week's work."

And, secondly—

"Except with the consent of the Local Government Board, temporary work shall not be so provided for the same person in more than two successive years."

The first principle laid down in the proviso was not concerned with the question whether or not a given applicant was a fit person to be assisted under the Act. On that important point he would have a word or two to say later on. It did not refer directly to the character of the applicant. But the second was clearly intended to indicate that the relief of recurrent distress was not contemplated by the Bill, and that the unemployed for whom the Bill was intended were respectable workmen settled

in a locality, hitherto accustomed to regular work, but temporarily out of employment through circumstances beyond their control, capable workmen with hope of return to regular work after tiding over a period of temporary distress. His meaning would be made more clear by reference to Mr. Charles Booth's classification of the inhabitants of the poorer districts of London:—A, the lowest, roughly corresponding to those who were hopelessly unemployed; B, those who were casually employed; C, those with intermittent employment; D, regular workers at low wages; and E, regular workers at standard rates of payment. The unemployed specially contemplated in the Bill were those who would be classed under D and E; it was not intended that work should be provided for classes A and B or generally for class C. A and B and the majority of class C would be regarded, in the language of the Bill, as persons more suitable for Poor Law treatment. Whether the present Poor Law organisation was adequate to deal with A, B, and the greater part of C was no doubt open to question, but the Bill made no claim to deal with the question of the unemployed as a whole, it attacked the problem only from above, leaving for future consideration the question whether any fresh measures should be devised for dealing with it from below. It would be safe, however, to say that, if treated by such methods from above and by more drastic treatment of the classes A and B, undoubtedly the task of Poor Law guardians would be greatly facilitated for dealing with the intermediate class.

He now passed to the objections which he gathered his hon. friend the Member for North Islington had to the Bill. His hon. friend's Amendment condemned the present proposals as—

“Contrary to the best interests of the State and especially detrimental to the poor themselves”

These were strong words, and in replying by anticipation he would state what he conceived to be the principle of the Bill in his own language. It was true the Bill for the first time would give statutory recognition to a system of giving employment relief by public

authorities unencumbered by the disability attaching to Poor Law administration. It was also true that it professed to create and maintain machinery for organising such employment and, to a limited extent, providing employment relief at the expense of the rates, and that this machinery was to be outside the Poor Law. These were undoubtedly important innovations, but he thought that, at all events as regarded the first of them, the innovation was more apparent than real. For at least twenty years local authorities had been giving employment relief without disfranchisement at the expense of the rates. On this point he thought it would be well that they should rid themselves of all illusions. When a local authority put in hand a public work and engaged on that work persons who avowedly were unfamiliar with that work, simply because they were unemployed, the local authority was undoubtedly giving relief, and giving it at the expense of the rates, to the extent to which the cost of the labour actually employed exceeded the cost at which the labour could have been provided by a contractor. If the work was useless, it was clear that the entire sum so spent by the local authority was spent in relief. He had no doubt that in the last twenty years there had been a considerable expenditure by public authorities on works of a useless as well as a costly character. For the purposes of his present argument he would not raise the question of useless works. He was content to assume that the work put in hand by the local authorities had simply been expedited, and that, sooner or later, it would in any case have been undertaken. But let them look at what had been done during the past winter.

According to a Return that had been presented to the House at the instance of his hon. friend the Member for Chelsea, a sum of something over £111,000 was spent during last winter by the Metropolitan authorities on work undertaken specially for finding work for unemployed workmen. It was not easy to calculate what that work would have cost had it been performed under ordinary circumstances, but he thought they would make a fairly generous estimate

if they put the value of the work done, calculated in wages, at a little over £80,000. That meant that during last winter £30,000 was spent by the Metropolitan authorities in providing relief for the unemployed, and almost all of that sum which was not paid by his right hon. friend's central committee was paid out of the rates. The figures in regard to the provinces were not so complete, but, from a Return made by eighty-nine of the largest towns in the United Kingdom, it appeared that during the month of January, in seventy-four out of these eighty-nine places the local authority gave relief employment, and the men employed at one time or another during the month of January in the provinces numbered about 21,000. In London, during the same month, 20,000 or 21,000 men were employed; therefore, in the course of January, the local authorities were employing, without disfranchisement and at the expense of the rates, about 41,000 men. His information as to the cost of the work in the provinces was meagre, but it appeared that in five towns alone—Manchester, Salford, Leeds, Bradford, and Sheffield—about £36,000 was spent on employment of this kind from the end of the autumn to the end of the first week in March. Not only had it become a practically universal practice for local authorities to give employment relief in times of distress, but that practice had for many years received encouragement and recognition both officially and from Committees of that House. In 1886 his right hon. friend the Member for West Birmingham issued a circular to the boards of guardians containing a recommendation that in districts in which exceptional distress prevailed the guardians should confer with the local authority and endeavour to arrange with the latter for the execution of works on which unskilled labour might be immediately employed.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): That applied to exceptional distress.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that was so. The circular, he continued, further suggested that the men employed should be engaged on the recommendation of the guardians as being persons whom it

was undesirable to send to the workhouse or to treat as subjects for Poor Law relief. Since that occasion the Local Government Board had on many occasions sent out similar circulars. One, he thought, was issued at the time when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton was President of the Board. There was also a circular sent out by his right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland last winter, containing instructions to the committee established under his scheme, which formed the basis of this Bill.

Not only had successive circulars approved this form of relief being giving by local authorities, but a similar line had been taken by Committees of the House itself. A Committee of that House sat in 1895 to inquire into the question of distress from want of employment, and another Committee sat in 1896, and they had under their consideration the policy of these circulars issued by the Local Government Board. These Committees reported that they were unable to see any valid objection to the policy advocated in these circulars. It had to be remembered that the local authorities were not advised to manufacture or create work with a view to giving employment, nor were they recommended to proceed with works at a time when the climatic conditions would prevent their being properly executed. But these Committees went somewhat beyond a mere endorsement of the policy already adopted by the Local Government Board. The Committee of 1895 recommended that the guardians of any Metropolitan union might be empowered, with the sanction of the London County Council, to agree with any sanitary authority within their union that, in consideration of the latter's employing such number of persons and during such periods as might be agreed upon, the guardians should make a contribution to the sanitary authority of an amount not exceeding one-half of the cost incurred in the employment of such persons, such contribution to be a charge upon the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. It would be observed that this proposal went considerably beyond the proposal

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in the Bill, for under the Bill any contribution from the central fund towards the works undertaken for the relief of distress by the local authority would come, not out of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, but out of voluntary contributions. The Committee of 1896, after some hesitation, endorsed the recommendation of the Committee of 1895. They stated as their reason for endorsing that recommendation that in their opinion the proposed contribution from the central fund towards the work to be executed would not do more than cover the loss arising from the inferior efficiency of the labour employed in such circumstances and the extra expense of supervision and inquiry which would be necessary in connection with these works. It would be impossible to have a franker acknowledgment of the principle that work given to the unemployed by local institutions in such circumstances was, in effect, poor relief, although it was not accompanied by any of the disabilities attaching to the administration of the Poor Law. In view of this he thought he was justified in maintaining that the innovations proposed in the Government Bill were more apparent than real.

The methods adopted by the local authorities were open to the most serious criticism. If there was one rule better established than another in connection with relief work of this kind it was the rule that work should be made as continuous as possible. That rule had been systematically violated all during the past winter by various local authorities in the country. In one important county borough in the Midlands, the town clerk reported that the greater proportion of those on the list of unemployed only received four days work between November 16th and January 21st. The pay was at the rate of 3s. 4d. a day, so that the majority of those on the list of unemployed received, in the shape of relief, from the local authorities without disfranchisement, at the rate of 1s. 2d. a week for eleven weeks. That might be an extreme case, but it was a very common case indeed for the unemployed to obtain relief work for only two or three days or for them to be given in turn three or four days with the prospect of waiting for

further work until their turn came round again. In some cases the unemployed were given work in alternate weeks, but it was quite the exception for work to be given for six days in the week and for several weeks consecutively, and practically one might say that that was hardly ever done except when the wholesome influence of the Central Committee appointed under his right hon. friend's scheme was able to make itself felt. In December the average number of days work given to each of the unemployed who were relieved amounted in the provinces to 7·2 days and in London to only 5·3 days. The figures for January were a little better, being nine days in the provinces and 6½ days in London. He thought there would be a general feeling that such discontinuous work probably did more harm than good, as it was not enough to preserve the workmen's homes from being broken up, and it was just the kind of work that specially attracted the man who did not want to find regular employment. He could not but agree with the view of the surveyor of a county borough who stated that in his opinion the present system of relief by local authorities largely increased the number of men who were prepared to accept two days work a week, and go on in that way for the remainder of their existence. Another and most important defect in the methods of local authorities was the absence of sufficient discrimination between those who were deserving and those who were undeserving of relief of this kind. He could give many cases of this, but he would mention one of a London borough in which one day's work was given to all married men on the register before Christmas so as to ensure their having something on Christmas Day. That was really nothing more nor less than a charitable dole, and could not possibly do any good.

MR. H. LAWSON (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): Was that Poplar?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said, he would not give the name, but it was not Poplar. This defective discrimination was usually accompanied by discontinuity of work and by exiguous earnings, which were really doles under the mask of wages. An instance of this was afforded

by an urban district just outside London which in September last passed a resolution that 30s. a week should be the minimum wage given to its employees, and when the accounts of the council came to be audited it was stated, and not denied, that persons had actually left the employment in which they were regularly engaged in order to take jobs upon the relief works opened by the council for the unemployed so that they might get the advantage of the minimum wage.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Was that done under the scheme this winter?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR replied that it was not—it was in a district outside London. The position under a system of administration such as he had described was correctly summed up by a committee of the Charity Organisation Society in a report issued by them in November last where they said—

“There are at present two public relief agencies in the field—the Poor Law under the orders of the Local Government Board, and the borough councils who have a free hand.”

What was the best method of dealing with that situation? He supposed his hon. friend would probably say that the proper way to deal with the situation was to prevent the local authorities from giving employment relief in any shape or form, and to insist that boards of guardians should return to stricter methods of Poor Law relief and administration. That was heroic, but he very much questioned whether, in times of exceptional distress, it would be found to be practical politics. The feeling that respectable persons who were out of employment through no fault of their own, but simply by reason of the fluctuations in our industrial system, should have some prospect before them other than the workhouse or the guardians' relief yard was one that must be reckoned with. Moreover, it was a growing feeling, and, if his hon. friend had his way, the effect would very probably be a reaction which would carry us very much further in those directions which he himself was anxious to avoid than the modest proposals of the Bill. In the opinion of the Government it was not wise at the stage we had reached to have recourse to a

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simple *non possumus*, or to interpose a mere dam or barrier in the way of public opinion instead of endeavouring to guide it into channels which should lead to the least harm and be most likely to be fruitful of good. Therefore, their object had been to create a permanent machinery which should organise and combine and influence in directions approved by experience the actual efforts that should be made at the present time for the relief of the unemployed. Still more, they wanted to provide machinery which should be able accurately and properly to discriminate between the classes whom it was desirable to relieve by this Bill and those whom, they thought, ought to be more properly dealt with under the Poor Law. The question of discrimination was the crux of the problem. If they could not adequately distinguish between the deserving and the undeserving, if both alike were to be mingled in the receipt of the benefits intended by the Bill, it was quite possible that the measure would do more harm than good, rather increasing than diminishing the difficulties of the Poor Law authorities. But he did not believe that adequate discrimination was impossible. That was proved, to his mind, even by the working of his right hon. friend's scheme, under which, on the whole, the discrimination had been carried out not unsatisfactorily, but he should hope for very much better results when they had a machinery which was permanent, with a staff of its own ultimately, with a body of experience and tradition behind it, controlled by the regulations of the Local Government Board and, in addition, compelled to cut its coat according to its cloth. It had to be remembered that none of the proposed new bodies would be entitled—with one exception to which he would refer—to provide employment except out of voluntary contributions.

His hon. friend the Member for Chelsea was very much concerned at the prospect of a new charge being imposed on the rates to assist the unemployed. But what was the nature of the expenditure that would be sanctioned out of the rates under the Bill as introduced? In the Bill it was expressed negatively; it might with advantage be expressed more

precisely and positively, and he would be prepared to consider Amendments with that object in view. The purposes for which under the Bill they proposed that it should be possible to draw upon the rates were four—(1) the expenses of the establishment of the local and central bodies, (2) the expenses of providing and maintaining labour exchanges and employment registers, (3) the expenses connected with migration and emigration, and (4) the expenses of acquiring, equipping, and maintaining farm colonies and providing work for the unemployed on those colonies. As regarded the second and third of these proposals there was no very great novelty. The London municipal boroughs were already empowered to establish labour bureaux, and although the law on the point was somewhat obscure, several local authorities in the provinces had done the same thing. With regard to number three, not only the guardians but the county councils had the power to use the rates at the present time for aiding emigration. As to the expenses of the establishment and the staff of the local and central bodies, that was merely a necessary corollary to the central principle of the Bill, which was to establish such bodies and make them permanent. He did not suppose any one was likely to quarrel with such proposals except those root-and-branch opposed to the Bill. The expenditure upon farm colonies stood upon a somewhat different footing, but he thought it would be very undesirable that the central bodies should not be given an opportunity of trying the experiment of farm colonies, and if the experiment was to be given a fair trial, it was clear such farm colonies must form a permanent part of their machinery. They could not improvise a farm colony, and, once they had established a farm colony, it was necessary to provide for its maintenance from a source which could be relied upon year in and year out.

MR. H. LAWSON: Will the farm colonies be preparatory to emigration?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he was coming to that point. It seemed to follow that at all events the expense of acquiring, equipping, and maintaining a farm colony should be payable out of the rates. But he might be asked why

go beyond that; why provide in the Bill not only that farm colonies might be acquired, maintained, and equipped out of the rates, but also that employment thereon might be provided out of the rates? Was not that an exception to the rule generally laid down in the Bill that expenses of that kind were to be drawn not from the rates but from voluntary contributions? He admitted there was some force in the objection, but really the considerations which had moved the Government were principally those of administrative convenience. It would be difficult and perhaps impossible to distinguish between the expense of maintenance and the expense incurred in providing work for the unemployed on the farm colony, and for that reason no attempt was made to distinguish the two in the Bill. Whether the item was likely to be an important one or not was a doubtful matter. He thought for many reasons farm colonies were not adapted to meet the requirements of the large majority of the unemployed for whom the Bill was intended. Farm colonies, in his opinion, should be primarily for the purpose of training in agricultural pursuits persons who were willing to emigrate or to change from a town life altogether to life in the country. He thought there would, amongst the better class unemployed in the large centres of industry, always be a percentage of men who were willing to leave town life and take to country life. What the percentage was he would not like to attempt to conjecture, and he did not think anything but experience would show, but that there was an appreciable number of such men he did not for a moment doubt. The message of hope which had been conveyed in a report just issued by Mr. Rider Haggard should remind them that the potentialities in that direction were possibly considerably more than many people, as a rule, suspected.

Before he sat down there were one or two points to which he would like to advert, upon which some misconception seemed to have arisen. The proviso to Sub-section 5 of the Bill had been interpreted to mean that the standard rate of wages paid in the district for any class of work should not be paid for work provided for the unemployed by the central body. That

was a mistake. The words had been chosen so as to admit of the payment of the standard wage per hour. It was only the standard remuneration measured by the week which must be something less than the rate for unskilled labour. That would be attained by reducing the hours rather than by reducing the pay per hour. He would be quite willing to adopt another form of words if a better could be suggested. It seemed, moreover, to be commonly thought that the Bill was compulsory in London, but optional in the provinces. That was not quite correct even with regard to counties; and with regard to county boroughs, which were much more important in this matter, it was not correct at all. Even in counties where bodies had not been constituted under the Act the county council would be under the obligation to constitute a special committee charged with the duty of establishing a labour exchange and employment registry. The effect would be to create a kind of network of labour bureaux and employment registries all over the country, which might possibly in the end prove to be one of the most important results of the Act.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): Will these be under the Local Government Board or the Board of Trade?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said they would be under the Local Government Board. They would, of course, be under the bodies created by the Act, but under the Local Government Board so far as the latter might make regulations respecting them. As to the county boroughs, the adoption of the provisions of the Bill was not optional, but compulsory, only subject to postponement with the consent of the Local Government Board. He conceived the Local Government Board would not postpone without very good cause being shown. He entirely sympathised with the idea that the unemployed might be attracted into London if the Bill applied to London alone. In his judgment the best safeguard against that danger—undoubtedly a considerable danger—was to be found in the provision of a sufficient period of residence. In his judgment such period ought not to be less than twelve months. He was quite

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willing to consider the omission of that provision as to postponement altogether, if the county boroughs did not strongly object, which he did not for a moment suppose they would. As to Clause 4, dealing with the powers of the Local Government Board, very insufficient attention had been given to that. The powers were very wide indeed, and rendered unnecessary the insertion of a variety of safeguards and limitations which otherwise would have had their place in the text of the Bill. The effect of the Bill, if passed, would be not indeed to bring the borough councils under the direct control of the Local Government Board but to bring them indirectly within the influence of that Board through the new administrative bodies which the Bill created. The Local Government Board were fully cognisant of the very great and heavy responsibility which the Bill would throw upon them and the importance of the part which the central authority would have to play, especially at the outset, if the advantages which the promoters hoped from that measure were destined to be realised. He begged to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

***SIR GEORGE BARTLEY** said he rose to move "That it is most inexpedient for the national welfare, contrary to the best interests of the State, and especially detrimental to the poor themselves, by tending to reduce their self-reliance and independence, that a system of relief, whether supported by municipal rates or Imperial taxation, be established in addition to and outside the existing Poor Law." He was aware he would lay himself open possibly to being misunderstood, and that it would probably be said that he was out of sympathy with some of the great social questions of the present day. They were all agreed that the condition of the country at the present time was not all they could desire, and in objecting to this Bill he claimed to be actuated by the same motives as hon. Gentlemen who supported it in every way. He did not think that this was the right way to look at this problem. When a patient was ill they did not give him

everything he asked for, and it was not considered unkind to refuse what was not for the patient's good. He felt very keenly the position of the poor, with whom it had been his interest and lot to work for many years. He was getting well on in life and he had seen as much as any of those who were taking an interest in this problem. He objected to this measure not only because he thought it was contrary to the welfare of the whole country, but because, in his opinion, it would be detrimental to the interests of the poor people whom it was specially proposed to relieve. If the House would bear with him in the somewhat lengthened remarks he had to make, he would endeavour to show that all past experience proved that, in doing this, they were really aggravating the sufferings and hardships of the people, and, instead of relieving, tending largely to increase their misfortune.

What were the objects of the Bill? The right hon. Gentleman who introduced it had described its provisions, and, verbally, it was correct to say that the measure did not give the right to employment, but he believed that the measure constructively, and by the general interpretation of everybody, did give the right to every person to receive employment from the public authorities. It had established in the public mind the idea—and this to him was a startlingly novel feature—that they were going to pass an Act of Parliament which would give people the right to obtain employment when they could not, or did not get it by themselves. He was sure that was the idea which the public had of the Bill, and in order to show this, he would refer to one or two speeches which had been made. At a meeting of the Labour Joint Committee the other day, a resolution was passed in the following terms—

“That we express our opinion that the recognition of the responsibility of the public authorities to provide work for the unemployed is a sound principle upon which to base any attempt to deal with unemployment.”

The committee consisted of gentlemen of great position in the industrial world who had taken a deep interest in the subject, and that resolution appeared to

show clearly that they regarded the Bill as providing a means by which the State would find employment for those who needed it. At a meeting the other day, after the Leicester unemployed arrived in London, Alderman Sanders, who had a great deal to do in getting up the meeting, expressed the opinion that the Leicester men were right in coming to London to make a demonstration, not to the King who was powerless in the matter, but to the Members of Parliament who could help, and would do so as soon as sufficient pressure was brought to bear upon them, and he added—

“A Bill should be passed to enable every honest workman to get work when he demanded it and could not get it from a private employer.”

These were serious considerations. This Bill had a number of safeguards connected with it which would be of no earthly use when it became law. These safeguards would fail at once if they survived the Committee stage. Conceive it how they would, if they passed this measure it would be implied that Parliament had laid down for the first time that work should be supplied for the unemployed throughout the country. He ventured to say that the House ought to think very long and very carefully before they passed such a measure. This was not a Party question in any sense. It was a question of the very gravest moment for the welfare of the country. It was not, as he would show presently, a new experiment. It was a policy which, as past experience had shown, brought disaster and serious consequences with it. He ventured to assert that the want of employment was small, but, even if it was large, he said emphatically that it would be absolutely impossible to carry out such a Bill as this. If the real demand for employment was large the provisions to be found in this Bill would be as nothing in doing what was wanted, but the attempt to carry it out would produce evils of a very far-reaching nature. It would create conditions which would be very difficult to alter. He considered that the bringing in of the Bill had already done a great deal of mischief, and the passing of it would do an immense deal of evil to the community at large.

In looking at this measure from the practical point of view the first question to be considered was—Is the employment to be remunerative or unremunerative? If there was any idea that the work that was to be supplied was to be remunerative, was it conceivable that a public body could find it sooner or better than an employer or the unemployed themselves? Surely the trade of this country had been built up by the industry and enterprise of the people—employers and employed—and not by the State, and, therefore, if the work which was to be done under the provisions of this Bill was to be remunerative there was no need to have the Bill at all, because work would be forthcoming without it. He did not believe that a body of aldermen, a town council, or even the President of the Board of Trade, could do anything to assist trade if it was to be of a remunerative character. But the fact was that the work which would be supplied would not be of a remunerative character. It would be work which would cost a great deal more than it was worth, and, therefore, it would be of an unprofitable nature. There was no difficulty, of course, in creating work if money was provided to pay for it. Stones could be carted up a hill and then carted down again, but the only way to get the poor of the country to make progress was by remunerative work. Therefore, it seemed to him that what was really proposed was to pass an Act of Parliament to create unprofitable work at the cost of someone else—that was to say, that the loss should be cast on the ratepayers or the taxpayers. The real crux of the Bill was that it was to provide work for those who could not get it for themselves, and that the loss resulting from this unremunerative work should fall upon others.

The next question was—Who is going to pay for the unremunerative work? They must face the absolute facts of the case. The Bill said that the loss was to be borne by the rates. This proposal, he noticed, was not quite accepted by all the supporters of the Bill. Many persons wished to throw the loss on taxation. It was germane to the question to refer to what would be the effect of throwing this additional burden on the rates. People were apt to forget the present

condition of the rates, and he would refer to the facts in connection with the borough of Islington, part of which he had the honour to represent in that House. In the last ten years for one thing and another there had been an addition to the rates to the extent of 1s. 7½d. in the £, while, at the same time, the debt of that parish had increased by £1,383,000. That 1s. 7½d. on the rateable value of £2,000,000 meant that at the present time there was taken from the ratepayers of the borough of Islington £162,500 a year more than ten years ago. Was not that a somewhat startling fact? Was not that enough to account for some of the want of employment? They were going by this Bill to increase the cost to the rates. He said emphatically that they must consider where this great cost was to come from and who would have to pay it. In 1901 in the same parish there were 582 empty houses, and there were now 1,481. According to the borough treasurer, if those houses were occupied there would be a reduction of 3d. in the £ in the rates of Islington alone. They were driving away the people, and by that means causing a greater burden to those at the bottom of the scale who were suffering most now, and who had great difficulty in keeping their head above water. It was a startling fact, as showing how the rates were increasing, that in April last in Islington 6,800 summonses were issued for rates in the last quarter against people who could not pay. The local paper said this showed how the people were being sucked dry by the existing rates. And yet it was proposed on what he thought were very insufficient reasons to impose an additional burden which he ventured to say would, in a short time, amount to a figure they had no idea of at present, to provide unprofitable work for the unemployed at rates of payment he should presently refer to.

What was true of Islington was true also of the whole country. The rateable value of England and Wales, including London, in 1874 was £115,000,000, and in 1902 £195,000,000, and, instead of there being a reduction in the rates, they had increased from £20,000,000 in 1874 to £42,500,000 now. Nor was that all. The grants from the Imperial Exchequer,

which amounted in 1874 to £1,500,000, had now reached £12,500,000, so that the total rates had increased in England and Wales from £21,500,000 in 1874 to £55,000,000 now. These somewhat startling facts were enough to show that the House should pause and consider seriously when it was proposed that a great additional outlay should take place. The Bill also authorised the localities to borrow money. This power to borrow was, to his mind, one of the curses of the present day. They were borrowing in all directions and piling up indebtedness, the cost of which fell more and more on the poorest of the poor, who were struggling not to sink but to keep their heads above water. This cause must lead to a shrinkage of employment. This large additional sum of £162,500 was taken out of the pockets of a population of 350,000, nearly all of whom were comparatively small people, and there must be, therefore, less for them to spend and to fructify in producing employment. He maintained that the large increase in the rates had done not a little to increase the shortage of labour, which was the very trouble that was proposed to be dealt with by the Bill.

It was said, "Do not put this charge on the rates but on the taxes." The Labour Joint Committee said that the Exchequer should supply most of the cost, because it was easier to pay out of the Exchequer than out of the rates. But what did that mean? It meant further taxes on tea, sugar, tobacco, and alcohol. It was said that the receipts from the duty on alcohol were decreasing, and it was to be hoped that the habits of the people were improving in that respect. Then, if that were the case, it meant that the income-tax was to be increased, because there was a general idea that the rich ought to pay, and that the rich were the people who paid income-tax. He had no objection to the rich paying a good deal; he, himself, should like to be able to pay more income-tax. But was it a fact that they were making the rich pay more in increasing the income-tax, and not injuring the poor far more seriously? In Schedule D of the income-tax there were 250,000 persons paying income-tax on incomes under £200 a year; and there were only

630 in the same schedule with incomes over £5,000 a year; and less than 9,000 with over £1,000 a year. That showed that if the income-tax were increased, it would add immensely to the burden on small persons at the bottom of the scale. He had been a little amused when the right hon. Gentleman referred to voluntary contributions. Now, did the right hon. Gentleman, or any one else, really believe that after this Bill was passed into law there would be any voluntary contributions for the unemployed? What was the use of blinding their eyes to that fact? He considered that that clause of the Bill might as well come out at once. His contention was that if this Bill passed employment would be given to the unemployed at the cost of the employed, and that the evil of unemployment, instead of being relieved, would only be aggravated in every possible way. Thousands who were now struggling manfully to keep their heads above water and pay their way would be dragged down by excessive burdens of rates or taxes and soon join the ranks of the unemployed and aggravate the evil we all deplored.

The next point to consider was the working of the Bill. In the first place it would create a new spending authority for the purpose of providing relief. That was a most serious step to contemplate. From a letter which appeared in *The Times* the previous day, there was no doubt that a large section of those gentlemen who had been at work in administering the Mansion House Unemployed Fund during the last six months saw great danger in creating this new spending department for providing relief. Let them say what they would, this employment was relief. He wished to press that point. Some people talked as if this employment was not relief, and that the men who received it were to a certain extent independent; but the fact could not be got over that it was relief, and that by the Bill a new upper-class relief agency was going to be created. It was impossible to conceive the enormous difficulties that would arise in the working of the measure. There would be continual rivalry between different bodies as to how these men were to be relieved.

The next point was as to the selection of the recipients of employment. The right hon. Gentleman acknowledged that that was the crux of the question; and that if the mode of selecting the recipients was not carefully guarded more harm than good would be done. As the Bill was drawn it stated that—

“The local body shall make themselves acquainted with the conditions of labour within their area, and inquire into and discriminate between any applications made to them from persons unemployed; and if the local body are satisfied that any such applicant is honestly desirous of obtaining work, but is temporarily unable to do so from exceptional causes over which he has no control . . . then they may endeavour to obtain work for the applicant.”

Surely that was extremely vague. He would ask a practical question. How long was a man to be out of work before he became eligible to get a grant? Was he to be eligible after the first week? Was there to be any test of thrift on the man's part? Was he to show any indication of foresight or providence? These were matters of the very greatest importance, and unless these inquiries were gone into very carefully the result would be very much worse than any other form of relief under the Poor Law. Then, were women out of work to be eligible for relief; or were clerks who earned smaller salaries than the wages of a good mechanic? Some of the saddest cases in his experience were those of clerks who had to wear a black coat and hat, who lived respectable lives at a salary less than a good mechanic, and who at forty, fifty, or sixty years of age were thrown out of employment. Surely these men should be eligible. [Mr. KEIR HARDIE: Why not?] They formed a large part of the unemployed, but would not come forward to demand relief, although these were the people who really ought to be looked after.

There was another point: if a man could not get work at his trade at full trade-union rates, was he to be considered out of work and to be provided with work? That was a serious question to ask. He knew perfectly well that a great deal would turn on that particular point, because, after all, a man might be able to earn a living at a smaller rate of wages than the trade-union scale, and yet that would not be sweating. He maintained that it was a very startling

and sweeping thing to pass a law which would declare that because a man could not get the full trade-union rate of wages at his own trade, although he might get work in another trade at lower wages, he was to be considered unemployed? If that was to be the case, he contended that they would undermine the very essence of the trade of the country. He insisted emphatically that they must, in this Bill, consider, in the selection of candidates for relief employment, whether these men could earn a sufficiency for themselves and families in other directions even if they could not get the full trade-union rate of wages.

As regarded wages, he had heard with some surprise the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman on the subject, because he thought that the Bill provided that the wages to be earned were to be smaller than the wages earned by unskilled labour. The clause provided that the wages paid should be less than was ordinarily earned by unskilled labour during a full week's work. That would appear to mean that the trade-union rate of wages would be paid for a short time during the week provided that the total earnings during a week did not exceed that earned by unskilled labour for a whole week. That practically meant that the full rate of wages was to be maintained. He protested against that. Let them have the matter out. It was no good fencing with the question. Let hon. Gentlemen understand that, if the Bill passed, every unemployed workman would receive at the public expense full trade-union rates of wages whether employed on remunerative work or not. Indeed, if this were so, and it seemed to be the fact, the Bill was even more mischievous than he thought it was. What happened in his own parish? There was a certain amount of unemployment, and a number of men were employed at a lower rate of wages than the trade-union rate. The borough engineer declared that the men were not worth the trade-union rate; but it was settled by the council that the men should be paid full trade-union rates, and they were paid back pay at those rates. He might be behind the times; but it appeared to him extraordinary to pass an Act of Parliament

by which men were to be paid full trade-union rates at the public expense, and by people many of whom were not as well off as the men who were paid. The Poor Law Commission of 1834 said that all relief afforded to the able-bodied or their families should be treated as a loan, and was to be recoverable out of their subsequent wages. There was no such clause in the present Bill. Further, the Commission declared—

“The first and most essential of all conditions, a principle which we find universally admitted, is that his (*i.e.*, the recipient of aid or a pauper) situation as a whole shall not be made really or apparently so eligible as the situation of the independent labourer of the lowest class. Throughout the evidence it is shown that in proportion as the condition of any pauper class is elevated above the condition of independent labourers, the conditions of the independent class is depressed, their industry is impaired, their employment becomes unsteady, and their remuneration in wages is diminished. . . . Every penny bestowed that tends to render the condition of the pauper more eligible than that of the independent labourer is a bounty on indolence and vice.”

That was the statement of the great Commission of 1834. Now, the right hon. Gentleman stated that the Bill provided that a mechanic should have the full rate of wages.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: All I said was that the Bill did not prevent it.

*SIR GEORGE BARTLEY said that that came to the same thing. The matter was very important. The only possible way of influencing the man that would be affected by the Bill was that he should be paid such wages that he should have every inducement to leave the work to be provided under the Act as soon as possible, so as to get higher wages for himself, and that he should have the keenest interest in this respect himself. He was glad that he had raised this matter, although it might be used against him in his own constituency. If the Bill removed the only incentive for a man to return to his ordinary work, it would effect more mischief than he had imagined.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that the hon. Gentleman appeared to forget that the total weekly remuneration must not

exceed that which could be earned by an unskilled labourer for a full week.

*SIR GEORGE BARTLEY asked if he were to understand that a man, even if employed continuously, would not receive a greater wage than would be earned by an unskilled labourer.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Certainly.

*SIR GEORGE BARTLEY said that in that case he did not understand the right hon. Gentleman's remark about trade-union wages being paid.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that what he stated was that if trade-union rates were paid, the total remuneration must be something less than that which could be earned by an ordinary unskilled labourer.

*SIR GEORGE BARTLEY said then that meant that the men were only to be employed for a certain number of hours. A deputation to the right hon. Gentleman, however, urged—

“Unless all limitations upon rates of wages paid, which are a serious menace to trades unions, are removed, the Bill cannot be accepted by organised labour, and we shall then call upon all friends of labour in Parliament to reject it.”

That meant that the trades unions insisted that the men to be employed should be paid the full trade-union rate of wages. He protested against that principle. Every man might not be able to get employment; but it was monstrous that he should be paid the full trade-union rate of wages on work which could not be remunerative and might involve considerable loss, a loss to be made up by others, many of whom were but little better off than the recipients themselves.

As to the emigration clause, reasonable and natural emigration was, of course, necessary; but it was not the unemployed or the ne'er-do-wells that emigrated. The people who emigrated were the strong and the healthy; the immigrants, on the contrary, were a most startling class. It reminded him of a man who drew whiskey out of a cask replenishing it with water, and then wondering why it had not maintained its

strength. He did not object to natural emigration; but to frame a Bill to get rid of the best portion of the working population, and at the same time to admit the worst class of immigrant, was one of the most extraordinary pieces of logic which he had ever heard.

Then as to farm colonies, surely they were rather a myth. He could not see how they could effect much good. They certainly would not relieve the want of employment among the better class of workers in London; and they were more a name than a reality. He had read of cases where men on a farm colony were paid 25s. a week, whereas the wages of labourers in the locality were very much lower. Surely that could not tend to promote contentment in the district. It meant that a man could come up to London and be sent back again as an unemployed at a higher wage than he was previously earning. The interesting Report issued recently by the Farm Colonies for the Unemployed last winter bore immensely upon this subject. The superintendent of the colony reported "that there were a large proportion of men who required the closest supervision in order to get from them anything like the standard of an ordinary day's work. The general lack of ambition in the men was very noticeable." He thought it was a very strong order to send such men to farm colonies. Such men ought to come under, and be dealt with by, the Poor Law, and for his part he could not see why they should be picked out to receive these advantages which were denied to others.

With regard to the question of disfranchisement he had no doubt the clause dealing with that was kindly meant, and he knew he should offend a great many hon. Members when he said that he considered that to put in a clause that those who received this kind of relief should not be disfranchised was wrong. They knew these people were unfortunate and they were all sorry to see misfortune, but was it right or politic, was it for the good of other people and for these people themselves, that the old notion that taxation and representation should go together should

be done away with, and that we should establish a law that a man should be kept by the community and should also make the laws for the community and vote on his own relief? If this were to be voted on by ballot in this House he did not believe such a principle would be for a moment conceded. It was only the fact that they were afraid to say what they ought to say that such a suggestion became possible. In his judgment it was infinitely kinder and better to hold out the idea that it was better for a man to do what he could for himself and keep his vote. This Bill created a class of persons supported by the rates who were not paupers; a superior class of social dependents, and the principle suggested was against the whole experience of the Poor Law Inquiry of 1834. They all regretted failures, but to tell a man he was not a failure did not make that man a success. The wise policy was to uphold that and induce the man to make every effort not to fail, rather than to make it easier, as this Bill did, for him to fail and then to tell him he was not a failure and that he was as good a citizen as he was before.

As to the effect of this Bill. First he asked what would be its effect upon London. The Bill was said to be compulsory in London and not elsewhere. The right hon. Gentleman had somewhat altered that, but whether it was altered or not there was a great deal of difference between London and elsewhere. He thought it was very cruel on London that this difference should be made; in fact, he could not think of anything more unfair to London than this Bill. They had all read the account of the march of the unemployed on London. It was one of the saddest incidents he had known. But this Bill would promote and encourage these unhappy incidents. What they wanted was to encourage people to leave London rather than to come to London, and to make them understand that there was much more to do out of London than in it. The effect of this Bill on London would be of a most disastrous character. The remedy suggested by some was to make this Bill compulsory in the whole of the country, but he protested against that. If it was a bad Bill it ought

to be dropped altogether, because if it were carried out all over England the effect would become so large and so alarming as to be beyond all Government control. What effect would this Bill have on employment itself? Would it increase or decrease employment? The whole question was one of employment, and the statistics certainly suggested there had been some exaggeration as to the shortage of employment during the past winter. But if there was a shortage of employment this Bill would tend rather to increase than decrease the shortage. Would this Bill tend to reduce the output or increase the work of London? Had it not already tended to make it more impossible to carry out works except at a loss? Had it not tended to discourage enterprise, and would it not tend to the increase of that municipal socialism, which in his opinion was a blot on the country, and prevent private enterprise creating profitable work? All these were facts which would tend largely to do away with the employment of labour, because capital was shy and would not enter into enterprises unless there was a fair chance that those enterprises would be successful, and further capital was not stationary. It could move from place to place. He thought the effect of this Bill would be to discourage enterprise and so decrease the amount of labour now employed.

Then what would be its effect upon wages? The Parliamentary Committee was alive to the danger that it must lower wages, and they said that it must not in any way interfere with wages. But he would ask any man of business in the House whether it was conceivable that a law could be carried out, giving unprofitable employment to thousands of the community without affecting wages. Was it not certain that such a thing must lower wages, and to try to prevent it as hopeless as attempting to stop the rise of the tide. The money necessary to pay the wages did not grow nor drop from the skies; it was simply thrift in the past made use of in the present, and if this Bill were passed it must eat up some of the funds which otherwise would go to supply wages in the future, and therefore the result of this Bill must be to reduce the wage

fund of the community. One hon. Member recently said that we did not pay people enough; we did not pay a living wage and that therefore there must be a Bill of this sort in order to give employment to unemployed. No doubt there was some truth in that. There was a time when labour did not get its fair share, but it was open to doubt whether now a good deal of the want of employment now was not due to the fact that capital could not get a remunerative return. Many people hesitated to embark in enterprise now who would have embarked formerly, and that in itself looked as if enterprise was not so profitable as before, and, that being the case, the result again must be to reduce wages. The effect of this Bill must be ultimately to reduce the aggregate amount paid in wages. Nearly the whole burden of the Report of the Commission of 1834 dwelt on this question of supplementing wages by rates or other public funds, and it proved conclusively that it was fatal to the employed and unemployed alike. That showed conclusively the way in which this Bill would be likely to interfere with the progress of trade and industry and to reduce wages, and to become a blight on enterprise and on industry. He would like, with reference to the effect on industry and enterprise, to quote from a letter in that day's paper. The Bethnal Green Committee reported—

“Probably the most unsatisfactory result of having given work in the borough to 1,748 of the unemployed during the last winter has been the creation of a class of men who regard themselves as dependent upon a council for work. These men do not realise that the work given to them has been for the sole purpose of helping to tide them over a bad season. Many men regard the council as a large employer of labour able to continuously provide additional work to which they have established a right by having their names entered in the register.

“The immediate effect on the men themselves is directly calculated to lower their independence and to reduce their resourcefulness.”

That was a very grave consideration. The real effect of the Bill was pointed out in good words by Mr. Loch, the secretary of the Charity Organisation Society, a man who had done more for the poor—

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): No, no.

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*SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: A man who had done more for the poor than almost anyone else—

“The chief danger, however, is the creation of a new, and ultimately a very large, class of State dependents. There is abundant evidence that we have during the last twenty years been creating such a class. Since the unemployed circular of the Local Government Board which was issued in 1886, the demand for employment relief from local bodies has continually increased. Larger numbers have been relieved by them, and popular intimidation has often forced the hand of reluctant authorities... It may be expected, therefore, that the local demand for employment relief will continue and will be met by the borough councils, and will be supplemented by the central committee dealing with selected cases. If this be so, the Bill will not stop the growth of dependents upon employment relief, but will supplement it and stimulate it.”

Then as to the cost; could the Bill do what it professed at anything like the amount mentioned? A halfpenny or a penny rate had been referred to. A halfpenny rate in London represented about £80,000. Last winter the Mansion House Fund raised about £50,000, and the local authorities spent a great deal in addition; 40,000 or 50,000 people applied, and about 2,600 were relieved by that fund.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): The hon. Member is making a grave error. He says that £50,000 were raised by the central committee, and that the municipalities spent considerable sums in addition. He then states that only 2,600 were relieved, ignoring the fact that those 2,600 had no reference whatever to the relief given by the municipalities.

*SIR GEORGE BARTLEY said the 2,600 were relieved entirely by the £50,000—as he thought he stated. The 2,600 were relieved by the Mansion House Fund, and in addition large sums were raised, as at Islington and elsewhere, by the municipalities.

MR. WALTER LONG: My hon. friend is still not stating the case correctly. The central committee had considerable sums to dispose of, and they applied the money in two ways: first, by direct assistance to men employed in particular works, and, secondly, by contributions to local authorities for work which they were carrying out. The 2,600 were the men

employed directly by the central committee.

*SIR GEORGE BARTLEY said the point he was trying to make was as to the cost and it appeared that last winter a sum roughly equivalent to the proceeds of a halfpenny rate was expended. According to the last Returns of the Board of Trade there were 5 per cent. of unemployed, but if a really serious shortage of employment arose throughout the country the percentage would be nearer 15 or 20. A penny rate throughout the country would bring in about £1,000,000 a year—a sum which would be absolutely infinitesimal compared with the cost of such a shortage of employment. Twenty years ago Professor Leoni Levi calculated that the wages of the country amounted to £1,000,000,000 a year. The amount now would be considerably larger, but even on £1,000,000,000 a shortage of employment represented by 10 or 15 per cent. would mean £100,000,000 or £150,000,000, to meet which a penny rate would be absolutely useless. The demand for employment, if once granted, would mean that employment must be given whatever happened, and this penny rate would be like the 3d. rate in connection with education; it would be but the beginning of a gigantic expenditure, leading to an enormous demoralisation of the people.

Having shown the object, the working, the effect, and the cost of the Bill, he naturally asked whether it was necessary to pass such a measure as that now proposed. Was employment worse than it was twenty years ago? According to statistics it was not. In fact, it might fairly be said that things were not as bad now as they formerly were. He was now coming to the most thorny portion of his remarks. It was a dangerous thing for a politician to say, but he was emphatically of opinion that many of the causes leading to the present trouble were curable by the people themselves. Trades unionists would not deny that wages were higher, and the necessities of life cheaper than they used to be. One of the great points in connection with the Report of 1834 was the ignorance of the people, but for thirty years we had had compulsory education, so that that plea was no longer valid. With wages higher,

education universal, and commodities cheaper, was it not a strange thing that pauperism was growing rapidly?

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Only since the war.

*SIR GEORGE BARTLEY pointed out that one of the most startling facts was that in the last week's Returns, although employment was better than a year ago, there was a considerable increase in pauperism. In considering this problem it was necessary to face the question of the expenditure of the people on alcohol and amusements. Although so much was heard of the lack of employment and the increase of poverty, yet the expenditure on alcohol per family in the United Kingdom amounted to £19 14s. 11d. It could not be said that expensive wines were the cause of the high expenditure, as the amount per family in England was £19 4s. 7d. without wine, and only slightly over £20 wine included. Did not that show that the condition of the people arose largely from causes which without this Bill the people themselves, if they chose, could amend to a very great extent? If wages were better, necessities cheaper, and employment not worse, and at the same time the expenditure on alcohol and other extravagances was maintained, was it not clear that the people themselves, and not the State or the community, should be appealed to for real relief?

This was not the first time such an experiment had been tried of finding employment for the unemployed. He had already referred to the condition of the country previous to 1834. Every effort was made to supplement wages by the system of municipal employment, but it was found to be so harmful to the people that by a House of Commons just reformed, made more democratic, and put upon a broader franchise, it was done away with. Then there was the lesson taught by the establishment of municipal workshops in Paris in 1848. The experiment was initiated from the very best motives. It was declared to be the duty of the State to guarantee work to every citizen—in the language of the present day to provide work for the

unemployed. The unemployed man who desired work had to furnish himself with a certificate of domicile from his landlord, get it stamped by the police, and present it at the office of the mayor of his ward, where it was exchanged for a ticket for work. Work in Paris was confined to residents in Paris, and the men received certain wages. Recourse was had to the simplest forms of manual labour, such as earth works, levelling, fetching and carrying tools, and so forth. The continual cry of the director as the brigades kept multiplying under his hands was "work, more work." Meanwhile the work that was done was costly, partly because many of the labourers were tradesmen unfit for the job, partly because many put no heart into their efforts, observing that anyhow some pay was secure. This was all wonderfully like the present day. He did not for a moment say that the state of London to-day was the same as that of Paris in 1848, but human nature was very much the same. And what were the results of that experiment in Paris? Private factories came rapidly to a standstill for lack of hands. Either the masters closed them in despair, or because the men deserted them, preferring the chance of public employment. Trade was consequently worse disorganised than before, and the distress increased. Provincials flocked up in thousands to share in the benefits of Paris. Lodgings, which in January had held about 8,000 or 10,000 persons, by the middle of April were crammed with 30,000. The rapidity with which the system grew was shown by the fact that on February 28th about 8,000 men were supposed to be out of work; on March 15th, 14,000 were brigaded for work; on March 20th, work was found for 12,000 men, and cost £2,000 a day; on April 1st, 40,000 men were brigaded; on April 16th 66,000 men were brigaded, and on June 20th the number had increased to 115,000, and a credit of 3,000,000 francs was voted by the Chambers. In four months the movement had grown to such an enormous extent that it had to be brought to an end. Had not that experiment a lesson for England? He did not wish to point the moral, as he did not believe the same final result would happen in London. But it was a serious thing to

raise the hopes of tens of thousands of people, leading them to believe that they were going to get constant work. In Paris it led to that great Revolution in which 12,000 men were killed, and it was sad to think that our own Legislature, unmindful of all the experience of the past, should contemplate beginning such a scheme.

It might be said that he was meeting this Bill with a *non possumus*, but he did not wish to do that. All that had been said about a shortage of work was very important and everything seemed to turn on that. He thought they ought to first find out whether there really was a shortage of work. He trembled in this connection to mention the word "fiscal" because he knew that he would be raising a thorny subject at once, but surely it was desirable that they should look into the question to find out whether the present system tended to reduce employment. If our system tended to reduce employment in Heaven's name let them alter it, even if it upset some of their most cherished ideas, whether fiscal, social, trades union or philanthropic. It was highly desirable that they should inquire first of all carefully and impartially whether our trade was decreasing. If, as so many who did not approve of any fiscal inquiry said, our trade was not decreasing, what was the justification for this measure? Why should this Bill be passed if employment and our trade were not decreasing? Wages at present were higher and better and they might easily deal with this subject in another way. The real difficulty could only be met by the efforts of the people themselves, by thrift, self-reliance, temperance, and enterprise, and by those old-fashioned habits which had made this country what it was to-day. He ventured to assert that no Government grants or municipal help, and not even robbing the rich—which had often been tried and had ended in greater loss to the poor—would be likely to benefit the country at the present time. Were they afraid to speak out and call things by their proper names? Was there a growing want of energy? Was indolence becoming a reality on the part of the people?

Charity, rates, and taxes could not support the people, however heavily applied, and could not save their trade and secure the people employment. The true remedy was to be found by the workers suiting themselves to the altered conditions which had arisen. This Bill would be a failure except in one respect. It could not supply profitable employment, but it would supply and encourage a want of independence and thrift on the part of the community. It would encourage fictitious employment for a time, and dam the rising tide till it burst out with all the greater and more formidable disaster.

He felt very strongly upon this subject, and he had only spoken at, he feared, too great length because he felt that the passing of this Bill would be a fatal step in the progress of the people, because it would create a new and most demoralising Poor Law. He appealed to hon. Members not to make this a Party question, because the poor would suffer in this matter more than anyone else. The Bill was a great experiment and a speculation, and the experience of the last twenty-two years was against taking such steps as were now proposed. If the measure was limited to London it would be a monstrous injustice, and if extended to the whole country it would outgrow all Government control. This Bill would establish a new Poor Law which would appeal simply to the weakness of the members of the community and not to their strength. As it grew it would degrade more and more, and in the words of a great authority he had already quoted—

"The degradation that may come from the distress due to want of work is as nothing compared with the enfeeblement that comes from the satisfaction of being dependent without loss of social respect."

He therefore ventured with great diffidence to urge the House to pause before passing this measure. Matters were not worse than they were previous to 1834. The revised Poor Law then established had done much to improve the country. It had saved tens of thousands of the poor from dependence, poverty, and pauperism. It had done this not by ministering to their weakness but to their strength. He had devoted many years endeavouring to make the

people more self-reliant, and he believed that the only qualities which would make either a nation or an individual prosperous were self-dependence, independence, temperance, and self-reliance. Let them maintain these qualities at all costs and at all hazards. This measure would enable men to more easily and pleasantly fall back into the wrong line, and for that reason he urged that the Bill should not be read a second time. He thought they should continue on the old lines, amended by the experience of the last eighty years, so as to make this country more dependent upon itself, and the aim of all laws should be to render every member of the community independent and self-supporting.

***MR. WHITMORE** (Chelsea) said he had the greatest possible pleasure in seconding the Amendment which had been moved by his hon. friend the Member for Islington. He had no sort of title personally to speak on this subject in the way which the hon. Member for Islington had spoken, for he was a high authority upon such subjects. He, nevertheless, seconded this Amendment with profound sincerity and the greatest earnestness, because after studying the history of this question he had been greatly impressed with the gravity of the step proposed by the Government in this Bill, which was a reversal of their present methods, and a step which might inflict incalculable mischief upon the community. This Bill laid down that in future the State should find employment for workmen who happened temporarily to be out of employment, and that was an entirely new departure. Why were they asked to take this step? He thought the Government had shown a certain amount of levity in the way they had introduced this Bill, for very little information had been given to justify hon. Members in supporting it. He did not know why they were to assure that in future there would be a continuous and permanent class of unemployed deserving workmen. It was said that this Bill was not intended to give employment to the wastrel and the loafer, and the measure was based upon the assumption that there would be in the future a continuous lack of employment for deserving workmen all over the

country. He thought that was a tremendous departure from what had been customary in the past. But was this assumption based on the truth? Was it a fact that there would be in the future this permanent and chronic lack of employment? If so, surely it was their duty to find out the real cause of this state of things. He did not think anyone would contend that the cause of this state of things was going to be removed by this Bill. In his opinion they should first ascertain what the real causes were and try to deal with them in some other way before they attempted to do something which in his judgment would tend to increase the evil which it was said that this Bill would remedy.

The right hon. Gentleman had tried to show that although the State had never accepted the principle of finding employment for deserving working men, in effect the principle had been acted upon by borough councils and vestries in London. He wished to point out that what had been done by the borough councils and the vestries was something different to what was now proposed by this Bill. What was done in the cases cited was done to meet temporary and exceptional distress. The President of the Local Government Board had pointed out how very badly in some cases the powers possessed by the borough councils had been exercised.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that under this Bill the local authorities would have a permanent staff, and would act under regulations of the Local Government Board.

MR. WHITMORE said that the mistakes which had arisen in this respect in the past had been due to the pressure which had been put upon local authorities, and no amount of admirable regulation would be able to prevent that pressure being exercised again in the future. As to the question of a central body, why should it really be more wise in administration of this kind than local bodies were? A kind of public pressure would be brought to bear which was undesirable. The whole truth of the matter was that it had not been proved that there was any real necessity for

new machinery being created to give employment to the unemployed. He asked the President of the Local Government Board this Question: Was he or the Government satisfied, if there was a new class of unemployed, that its creation had not been largely due to the laxer administration of the Poor Law in recent years, and also to the fact that the municipal boroughs of London and the municipal authorities of the country had been exercising these powers in the last twenty years to give employment to workmen? That had been the policy of almost all the borough councils. Workmen had been taught to believe that they would always get work when they wanted it. This Bill would help to perpetuate the very class of unemployed whom they were mainly thinking of dealing with. Much as he disliked opposing of any measure introduced by this Government, and particularly a measure which, as they all knew, was due to the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, who deserved so well of the public for his unselfish conduct during the past few months, he must, apart from all Party and personal feeling, consider what might be the consequences to the community of this fatal step they were now asked to take. He had heard it said that the borough councils had got power and had used it during the past twenty years and that they could not arrest this mischief at all. It seemed to him that they had entered unwarily on a dangerous course for some time, not knowing the direction in which they were going. But now that the issue had been plainly brought before the House as a legislative proposal it was their plain duty, as responsible men knowing something of the history of the country in the past, to say resolutely and deliberately that they would not go further on this dangerous course, and that they would not repeat the fatal error which their forefathers had made.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'it is most inexpedient for the national welfare, contrary to the best interests of the State, and especially detrimental to the poor themselves, by tending to reduce their self-reliance and independence, that a system of relief, whether supported by municipal rates or Imperial taxation, be established in addition

to and outside the existing Poor Law.'"—(*Sir George Bartley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he took a different view from that expressed by the last speaker. He for one welcomed this Bill in principle. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland was to be congratulated in the first place on his foresight in having created a Central Committee last year, and that he and his colleague, the President of the Local Government Board, were also to be congratulated on the courage they had shown in introducing this Bill. Perhaps the hon. Gentlemen who had spoken in opposition to the Bill would allow him to say that there was nothing whatever in the tone of their speeches of which any complaint could be made. He thought the same might be said of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who moved the Second Reading of the Bill, and he trusted that the same remark would apply to all successive speeches. They all desired to attain the same object, though they did not see eye to eye. In regard to the way in which the question of the unemployed should be dealt with they might differ, but they all desired, if they could, to find some solution of the problem. The hon. Gentlemen who moved and seconded the Amendment had seen many lions in the path. He (Mr. Buxton) did not deny that this proposal was not free from risks, but these were risks which the House of Commons ought to be prepared to take. He was prepared to support the Bill on this ground largely, that he saw now existing a greater and increasing danger—a condition of things which certainly led to a great amount of suffering and a great deal of demoralisation. He thought the speech of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment was in one part the strongest argument in favour of this proposal. The hon. Gentleman made no real suggestion for a remedy, but he pointed out that pauperism was increasing, and that our Poor Law guardians had become demoralised.

Mr. Whitmore.

If that was so, let them at all events try to mitigate, if they could not remove, the evil. It was on that ground that he wished to support the Second Reading of the Bill, and also to do his best to support it in the Committee stage.

So far as he was concerned, he was more disposed to applaud the courage shown in its introduction than to find fault or criticise the Bill. It appeared to him, at all events, to go in the right direction, and if it met with general approval, he thought it would do much to promote the object they had in view. What they desired at this moment was some statutory machinery by which this question could be brought under proper administration. This was the only way in which discrimination between one class of labour and another could be properly carried out. He also supported the Bill on the ground that for the first time it faced facts and recognised that the question of the unemployed was a national one. Further it was an attempt to deal with this question in anticipation. Hitherto, they had always waited until the last moment and then hurriedly did something. The hon. Gentleman who seconded the Amendment wanted to know whether the distress would be chronic or only occur from time to time.

MR. WHITMORE: The assumption of the Bill is that it will be chronic.

***MR. SYDNEY BUXTON** said he was not speaking of the assumption of the Bill. His point was whether they should have permanent machinery for dealing with the unemployed. It could not be denied that there were from time to time, whatever the cause, occasions when the number of unemployed was so great that public opinion was roused, with the result, unfortunately, in many cases, that action was taken in a panic and more harm than good was done in the matter. What he wanted to have was machinery ready and well oiled to deal with cases, whether chronic or arising in emergencies, so that it could be used at any time. Could anyone say that the present haphazard and spasmodic efforts of charity, of the Poor Law guardians and local

authorities without any system of co-operation could really bring about the objects they had in view to relieve the genuine unemployed? Unfortunately, under the present system, it was the genuine unemployed who were very often elbowed out of any of the benefits to be derived from it. The experience of the last winter showed at all events that some method of dealing with the unemployed who were genuinely desirous of obtaining work was required. There was practically no machinery to deal with them, except the Poor Law itself. And everybody knew that the Poor Law existed not to prevent but to relieve destitution. It was neither a preventive nor restorative. In fact, when a man, through want of employment, had to apply for Poor Law relief, and came within the clutches of the Poor Law, he unfortunately too often remained a destitute person for the rest of his life.

The hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment said a good deal about the expenditure on relief works and pointed out that they were always carried out at some extra cost. It was obvious that that would be so. It stood to reason that a man who had not been in regular employment for a considerable number of weeks or perhaps months, and who had been earning very small wages or perhaps no wages at all, must necessarily be inferior in physique to those who had been regularly engaged on such works. He would refer the hon. Gentleman to the Parliamentary Return issued the other day, containing the reports of the surveyors; who in several cases stated that the work done by the unemployed was satisfactory, and that as the men became better nourished they could perform their work as well as the ordinary labourers in the market. The Bill had been denounced by the hon. Member for North Islington as a new departure. He admitted that it was in a sense a new departure, because it recognised that the community owed an obligation in regard to this particular class of workmen, though he did not say that it went so far as to recognise the right of the unemployed to demand employment. It seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman the President

of the Local Government Board had practically disposed of the question of the principle of the measure, because he had pointed out that the borough councils and the municipal boroughs of the country had in the past expended very large sums on relief works. The expenditure last year in London alone amounted to over £100,000. Further, they had the power, under the present conditions, not only of carrying out works themselves, but of contributing out of the rates to the funds of the central body in order to carry out public works. This Bill did not contain any power which was not enjoyed at present by the local authorities, but it gave a recognition by the House of Commons that something ought to be done in the direction indicated.

As regarded London, the Bill was indeed something of a new departure which, he believed, would not meet with any opposition from those hon. Members who were interested in London questions. It recognised that the poor of London ought to be a common charge over the whole of London; and that London ought to be treated like every other town in the United Kingdom, as one area, with common interests and common burdens. That was a principle which, to his mind, ought to have been recognised long ago. Of course, there were certain risks connected with this experiment of dealing with the unemployed. But it was not such a leap in the dark as it might have been last year. They had the experience of the working of the Central Committee established by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and there was evidence that that experiment had been a success. The House ought to remember that the Central Committee were very much handicapped in the work they had to do. They were brought into existence very late in the autumn; and their funds were largely curtailed through the action of certain Borough Councils. But, in spite of all that, the enormous advantage had been shown of the co-operation between various persons and bodies in working out the problem, of the necessity of uniformity of action and discrimination between various classes

of labour. It was quite certain that after the creation of that central body of voluntary associations the work could not stop there, but that the voluntary Central Committee should disappear and become a statutory body.

Only two alternative courses to the proposal of the Government in the Bill now before the House had been suggested. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment desired to fall back on the Poor Law of 1834. Now, everybody admitted that, on general principles, the Poor Law Act of 1834 was very valuable. But that was seventy years ago, and circumstances had altered since then in regard to the fluidity of labour and the commercial position. Therefore, he could not think that they could depend on the Poor Law of 1834 to solve existing difficulties. Indeed, the hon. Gentleman gave away his own case when he acknowledged that the great complaint at the present day was the laxity of the administration of the Poor Law. From experience in his own constituency, he had some sympathy with that criticism. But he could not quite blame the local authorities, because there were a large number of men for whom the Borough Council could not provide work, and they gave these men relief in the hope that the Central Committee would soon be able to find them employment, a hope that was disappointed. He knew that if this Bill passed the local guardians would be relieved from the very onerous task now put upon them. That local pressure on the local bodies was at present a very serious matter, and one of the advantages of the creation of a Central Committee would be that local pressure would be eased. The other alternative was that proposed by the Charity Organisation Society, of which Mr. Loch was secretary—a gentleman who had been so highly praised by the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment. Mr. Loch said that—

“The remedy lay in the improvement of industrial organisation and in a more careful use of salaries, wages, profits, and other resources on the part of employers and unemployed.”

When they asked for bread, Mr. Loch gave them a stone. That theory would not deal with the problem now before the House and country.

Mr. Sydney Buxton.

If the Government proposal was not accepted, all those evils to which the hon. mover and seconder of the Amendment referred would arise again in the coming winter. They were told that this matter should not be dealt with hurriedly and in a state of panic. But it would again if there were no machinery. They were assured that a great deal of the evil of the present system arose from overlapping and competing charity. But if things remained as they were those evils would remain combined with the laxity of administration of the Poor Law guardians.

It was said that there was a very large amount of the expenditure of local bodies which was ineffective and extravagant; but that would necessarily recur if something in the nature of the proposals in the Bill were not adopted. The hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment seemed to think that because he was going to throw out this Bill he was going to save the ratepayers £100,000 a year. The only result would be that a very much larger sum would be spent year by year for relief; and that much of that amount would be wasted and do more harm than good. All the evils which the hon. Gentleman seemed to think lurked in this Bill either existed already or were imaginary. The Bill would bring system, method, safeguards, and discrimination into the solution of this most difficult of all social problems. As to the general principle of the Bill, he believed that unless they had something in the nature of unification and co-operation of all the various organisations dealing with this matter of employment, the problem would become more difficult of solution with every advancing year; and that they would have every year a larger amount of public and private money practically wasted.

The hon. Gentleman had touched on some of the details of the Bill. As the Bill was drawn, it was only applicable compulsorily to London, and not applied compulsorily to other parts of the country. Now he gathered from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill that he was ready to meet friendly Amendments in Com-

mittee to make the Bill applicable to large and even small boroughs, so as to make the appointment of central committees compulsory. For himself, he regarded that as an essential Amendment which ought to be made, and that the Bill should be made compulsory, not only in London, but in all industrial centres. In regard to the actual levying of the rate and to borrowing powers he was of opinion that these should, in London, lie with the London County Council and not with the central committee. The most difficult point of the whole Bill was in regard to the question of wages. As to wages, there were two points to be considered. In the first place, they should take care that the local authority or other body should not utilise the Act to reduce the average rate of wages in the locality or to get their work done below the ordinary cost at the expense of wages. On the other hand, they did not want to make work under the Act too attractive, or that men should, so to speak, be permanently employed or unemployed. The solution seemed to be to pay the recognised rate per hour, and either by working reduced hours, or in other ways, to make the work less attractive than work in ordinary day life. That was a solution with which he agreed. As regarded labour bureaux, they should be general throughout the country, and he should wish that the Local Government Board might be empowered to give them a grant, because it was essential that they should be under Government control, and be on a uniform basis. He did not for a moment imagine that if the Bill were passed they would have a new heaven and a new earth. However, it was the duty of the House of Commons to attempt to deal with the unemployed question, although the present attempt would not be final.

*MR. H. LAWSON said he thought this was one of those Bills in regard to which the House must be asked to distinguish between spirit and matter, principle and detail. The only principle that was at issue on the Second Reading was the erection throughout London, and he hoped also in every municipal borough and in every urban district in its vicinity, of machinery to deal with the

relief of the unemployed on the lines of the Mansion House Committee of last year. Those who were most strongly in favour of voluntary charity co-ordinated with the Poor Laws, men like Mr. Charles Booth, said it was most important that machinery should be set up for the very purpose for which this Bill was introduced. There was no other principle involved. The real defence for this Bill was that they should rescue the question of the unemployed from the chaos in which it now lay. There was not in the whole of the Metropolis a single borough council that had not for several years paid large sums for work given out at the wrong season of the year to men who cadged for it, even at the houses of the members of the council. This money was expended without supervision, principle, or control. What he was pleading for was that some principle should be laid down and some order established. What was true of London was equally true of most of the municipal districts around London. It had been stated by an hon. friend that the sum expended last year amounted to £110,000. The House was not now asked to sanction the expenditure of a rate for the relief of the unemployed. That sanction had been given long ago, and had been approved by the House. It had been sanctioned by the Local Government Board, and all they were now asked to do was to substitute some unity of purpose and some measure of supervision where at present there were none.

The argument had been advanced that this provision had only been used to meet exceptional distress, though everyone who had studied the conditions of the unemployed knew that unemployment was chronic and perpetual, and it was perfectly certain that there would be much the same average of unemployment every year. Therefore, when the borough councils year by year voted this money they had no doubt or scruple as to its expenditure. He thought the President of the Local Government Board said they must allow 30 per cent. for waste in using labour unfit for winter. He thought his right hon. friend under-estimated the wastage. He believed the waste was fully 50 per cent. Last year the London County Council gave

out certain work on its parks and open spaces, and they took on any number of labourers. Money was expended for the purpose; and he thought 75 per cent. was wasted. The guardians did not control expenditure of money on relief works in any way; it was the borough councils; and they were perfectly aware that they were really paying a rate in aid just as if they were the authority under this Bill. Therefore, in accepting this machinery they were most likely to introduce economy and to do away with overlapping and waste. The system proposed was a necessity. Every country had its unemployed, and in our Colonies the problem was even more difficult than it was here. They could not get rid of it by laying down abstract formulas; they must deal with facts as they were.

As a London Member, he took very serious objection to the position in which they would be left if the Bill passed as it now stood. London would be a sort of national doss-house. Therefore, in order to safeguard municipal interests, this machinery ought to be made general, else there would be a far more lamentable march of the unemployed to London than that which recently took place. He hoped there would be another Amendment in respect of machinery. Whatever the House might think as to the necessity of getting some unity of control, it did not want another staff of officers, and therefore, so far as they were concerned, he trusted advantage would be taken of existing machinery, otherwise the whole of the halfpenny rate allowed would be paid in salaries to officers and in equipping new authorities who were not wanted. Great care would have to be taken to assure the public of this; otherwise he did not think they would be able to rely on public charity. Money would not flow into those newly-constituted bodies from benevolent persons unless they were sure that it went to the unemployed and not in salaries.

Another point was that under this Bill boroughs would be able to borrow money to establish farm colonies. That was the only purpose for which money could be borrowed, but it should be strictly limited and defined. Personally, he did not believe that farm colonies

would be of the smallest use except as schools of preparation for a colonial life. It was no good to send an artisan or a clerk to a farm colony—the men who kept their heads above water during the summer and were then sent to a farm colony during the winter. The predecessor of the President of the Local Government Board obtained a Report as to the labour colonies in Holland. He read that Report; and all it proved was that they had got the same evils as existed among our own workers. There were men there who came year after year, the in-and-outs of the poorhouse. We did not want that system in this country. It was useless to raise a new class of unemployed who would go from county to county during the summer, and then be drafted off to a farm colony in winter. Such men would do a certain minimum of work, but would learn nothing. German experience proved the same. It should be remembered that as a rule a man was sent there at a time of the year when, unless he went there by way of training or sifting, he could learn very little of agricultural pursuits. That being so, he hoped these proposals in respect of farm colonies would be hedged about with the strictest of provisions. In fact, that was what this Bill required. If they were to set up machinery by statute, they must fence it in carefully, and if it was fenced in with sufficient care there was not much danger to the community involved.

In respect of residence, he understood that the President of the Local Government Board was willing to take precautions that relief should not be given to any except those who were genuinely located in the particular area, but why should he not adopt at once what was under the law of settlement termed the *status* of irremovability, that was to say, for one year? While venturing to make these remarks, he supported the Bill in principle, but they had got to guard against these armies of unemployed being attracted to London, where they would be a common danger and a common nuisance, and where there would be no adequate means of relieving them. Cobbet spoke of London as being a wen, which drew the life-blood of the people to it. They did not want London to become a

wen drawing life-blood of a different kind. With these precautions, he believed this measure might induce a certain amount of uniformity of practice and unity of purpose which were absent from the existing condition of things.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) reminded the House that the hon. Baronet the Member for North Islington gave utterance to similar fears and lamentations as those which had marked his speech that afternoon on the occasion of the introduction of the Free Education Bill some years before. He moved an Amendment then and would very likely have brought about the defeat of a Conservative Government had it not been that the Liberal Opposition came to the rescue. The House, therefore, need not be seriously alarmed by his predictions of evil on this occasion. He agreed with some of the hon. Baronet's remarks on the subject of temperance and thrift; but he did not think any Member should set himself up as a prophet on the point whether unemployment was likely to increase or decrease. All hoped that profitable employment would become more general, although it was no use ignoring the fact that the increase of machinery must inevitably tend to displace labour, and especially unskilled labour. Recently, he attended a great meeting of the unemployed in Leicester, nearly the whole of those men were unskilled workmen. Ninety-five per cent. of them were perfectly capable, and men who would try to keep employment if they had the opportunity. They were certainly not loafers, and he did not approve of the march of the Leicester men to London, and he used what little influence he had in order to prevent it. He did not think that any good could come of it, and he did not see that any great benefit had resulted to them in consequence of it. However, the men themselves were worthy of every consideration and assistance which could be given them by a measure such as that before the House.

Anything he might have to say about this Bill was of a friendly character. He should support it although he would have to submit certain Amendments at the request of the local authority of Leicester. His chief reason for supporting the Bill

was that there were and always would be a large number of men out of employment, and they could not be allowed to starve. There were three alternatives, that of public charity by a system like that of the Charity Organisation Society; that of Poor Law relief, which was degrading and which was harmful to the country and the people who received it; or there was relief based on the principle of this measure, to assist men, to help to provide employment, profitable employment, which should be beneficial to the community. In so far as this Bill aimed at that end it was a good Bill and one which ought to be supported by the House. He hoped, therefore, it would receive a Second Reading that day, and that the Government would not be deterred by any seeming opposition from forcing it through Committee and passing it into law this year.

He now wished to make a few observations which had been suggested to him by the local authorities of Leicester and with which he quite agreed. The borough of Leicester had had a very large experience, extending over a number of years, in dealing with large bodies of unemployed, and in their judgment the central board set up by the Bill should consist really of the members of the town council, and that the town council should call in the assistance of one or two guardians and have the power to co-opt other persons whom they might think desirable to serve on such board, for the reason that there could be no workman in Leicester who had resided in Leicester for a year or two but what some member of the town council could ascertain his merits in a few hours, and when anyone came to the board for employment, his character, history, and antecedents could be quickly and readily ascertained. He could then be dealt with much more easily and effectively on his merits by the town council than he could by a central board who would have to find their way about the question, and who would have, the great body of them, no particular training in these matters and would therefore not be so capable of dealing with them as members of the town council. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to agree.

Mr. Broadhurst.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the constitution of such a body would be very much the same as was proposed under the Bill. The proposal of the Bill was that town councils and guardians should co-opt members.

MR. BROADHURST pointed out that the body proposed by the Bill would work independently of the town council. That was the point of difference. Here would be an independent body, authorised to issue precepts on the town council for the levying of a rate; the town council as a body would be unable to refuse the precept, and would have practically no control over it. That was an important matter to a great industrial community. Then he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he would insert a clause requiring a year's residence to qualify for assistance.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I did not say I would insert a clause, but that it might be dealt with in the regulations.

MR. BROADHURST said the local authority of Leicester were in favour of inserting a two years qualification in the Bill itself. It was far better that the main principles governing the scheme should be laid down by the Bill than by the regulations. They were also strongly of opinion that the machinery of the Bill should be made compulsory in all districts, and that county councils should have the same obligation to provide within their areas as rested upon boroughs to provide in theirs, the fear being that otherwise there would be a constant migration from county to borough districts of this class of workmen to secure themselves against want. Just as London Members were anxious to guard against the Metropolis becoming the national "doss-house," so the provincial boroughs were anxious that their districts should not become county "doss-houses." Further, the orders of the Local Government Board, if they could not insist upon its being done, should at any rate appeal to all local authorities to co-operate in this matter. Co-operation meant less expenditure and greater efficiency. That was why borough councils were against the proposed independent central authority. Such a body would naturally appoint

officials, want office accommodation, and set up another system of government within the municipal area, whereas if the municipality had the control and management, few, if any, additional officers would be necessary, and in most cases office accommodation would be found in the existing municipal buildings.

The Leicester local authorities were strongly in favour of making the charge under the Bill national and not local, as the work was one affecting the nation as a whole. Voluntary contributions in aid of rates were not to be expected if people had to pay a rate for the same purpose. The proposal was a reasonable one, and he hoped it would receive favourable consideration. Some of the suggestions he had made would be put forward as Amendments in Committee; in any case, as much of the Bill as could be got would be welcomed, although he hoped the measure would be improved before it went to another place. The Government had shown some courage in introducing such a measure, it showed that the nation was recognising more and more its obligations to the less fortunate members of the community, who suffered so much from displacement by machinery and other causes, and he hoped the Bill would be passed into law before the session ended.

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford) said he could not agree with the hon. Member for Mile End when he said that this was not a Bill which introduced a new principle. He did not agree with the statement that this measure merely systematised existing powers so that they might be exercised in a more efficient manner. If that had been the only effect of this Bill there would have been no opposition to it. At the present time assistance could only be given to the unemployed either by the guardians or by the local authorities. As far as the guardians were concerned, they had no power to find employment or to grant assistance except the person who applied was destitute, and so far as employment was concerned they had no discretion whatever. Therefore they might put on one side any notion that the guardians had any power which was proposed to be given under this Bill. Local authorities at

the present time had no statutory power or right whatever to find employment for men out of employment. [AN HON. MEMBER: But they do it now.] Yes, but they only did it by increasing the number of their employees during times of distress, and they could only give people employment in connection with the public works which they had to carry out, and they had no right to employ men except under the ordinary industrial conditions.

He did not think there was any doubt whatever that this Bill introduced for the first time an extremely important principle which would have most wide and far-reaching consequences. Whether this Bill would tend to demoralise the working class or whether it would improve their moral and social condition was certainly a matter for argument. He hoped that hon. Members would not be deluded by what the President of the Local Government Board had put forward, viz., that this Bill did not introduce a new principle but simply systematised powers which local authorities already possessed under the direction of the Local Government Board. He joined issue with the right hon. Gentleman on that point. He wished to argue the point whether the conditions ought to be altered in the extremely important particulars proposed under this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the failure of the existing local authorities to deal with this question, and he assumed that by constituting new authorities less adapted to deal with these matters and with less knowledge, they would be able to create a new heaven and earth and get rid of all the failures of the past. Could anything be more absurd? The Poor Law Commissioners had declared that there was scarcely a statute connected with the administration of the Poor Law which had produced the effect intended by the legislation, but, on the contrary, they had created more evils and aggravated those which they were intended to relieve. The right hon. Gentleman had ridiculed the way in which the local authorities had conducted their administration, and then, instead of moving the rejection of this Bill, he went on to say that this measure introduced the Local Government Board and two new authorities who knew less

about the subject than any existing authority, and in this way they were told that a new era would arise. Under this Bill not only were they not likely to achieve the result the right hon. Gentleman anticipated, but they would be far more likely to emphasise those deeply-seated social evils which were connected with want of employment in this country, and it was upon that topic that he wished to say why he opposed this Bill.

The borough council of the district which he represented were of opinion that the whole principle of this measure was to create a class of paupers who would be free from the stigma of pauperism, and they believed that the measure would undermine the self-reliance of the working classes. Personally, he had had a large experience in Poor Law matters, and he could hardly conceive a Bill which would do more harm in its ultimate effect to the working classes. They had been told that this was merely a measure to enable them to make the best of the machinery now in existence, and in this way they were told that in future everything would be done for the benefit of the working classes. He thought they ought to emphasise the duties of the working classes as well as their rights. He was opposed to all those class measures, of which this was a bad illustration, which were constantly telling the working classes of the country that they had rights apart from duties, and that those who were out of employment were entitled to live upon those who were working. They were telling the thriftless that they had a right to live at the expense of the thrifty and industrious, who in many cases were not better off than themselves. Take, for instance, the underlying principle of this Bill. It could not be denied that if this Bill was passed, Parliament would recognise for the first time what might be called the right of employment in all the working classes of this country, and in saying this he did not wish to use the term "working classes" in any special sense. That was a fallacy, because no such right existed. There was no right to claim against the community in cases of want of employment. But he went beyond that. They could not imagine that they had got an organisation called "society" with infinite funds which might

be squandered, and which would always be sufficient for providing employment for those who were out of work, or for keeping those who would not work. There was no such right. No man who would not work had a right to live at the expense of those who did.

What was it they found in this Bill? Rival Poor Law authorities were to be created, and he asked the House to consider what that meant. There were now the guardians, the borough councils, and the county councils, and if there was one matter which really required reorganisation and amendment in regard to our local government system, it was that the present system should be simplified instead of having new boards added to those which we already had. What was proposed by this Bill was not one new authority but two. There was the local authority, and what was called the central authority. He would ask anyone with experience in local administration whether this would not create a greater evil by causing more extravagance for clerks, servants, and officials, thereby increasing the burden on the over-rated districts in order to relieve a few unemployed workmen in the course of the year? The officialism alone of this Bill would constitute an expense to the country entirely out of proportion to the duties which would be cast on the new authorities. He had a further strong objection to the measure. These new authorities were to take certain cases away from the Poor Law authorities. In other words, they were going to have competition between the authorities in regard to the particular form of relief to be given. Could anything be worse than that?

MR. BROADHURST: The hon. and learned Member seems to think that I am in favour of the creation of new authorities.

MR. CRIPPS said he was dealing with the Bill as it stood. The creation of a new authority was quite a different matter from the giving of additional powers to existing local authorities. It seemed to him that an essential portion of the Bill was the creation in every district of a local authority which would have either nothing to do because the

number of unemployed would be very small, or else be overwhelmed because of the demoralising tendencies which were to be introduced.

They were always speaking in this House in the abstract of economy. So long ago as 1883 the then President of the Local Government Board said that the pressure of the rates was so great that they were bringing down working men to the condition of paupers, and pressing so hardly on small manufacturers that they were no longer able to hold their own. Since 1883 the burden had greatly increased, and he protested in the strongest possible manner against a Bill of this sort which would put an additional burden on the ratepayers, who had never been consulted and knew nothing at all about the Bill. Once set this Bill agoing, and it would not be a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or a ld., but 6d., 1s., or 1s. 6d. which would be required. Although there was a great deal to be said against making this a national charge, that would certainly be preferable to making it a local charge. The Commission which inquired into the incidence of local taxation pointed out that the Poor Law expenditure under existing conditions had now become in the nature of a national charge. If the House was going to create a new principle of this kind it ought to find the money, and not shirk its responsibility by putting the burden on the over-burdened ratepayers in the various districts. A penny per £ on the local rates only produced £800,000, but a ld. on the income-tax produced £2,500,000. Therefore, in putting a charge of this kind on the local ratepayers they were relieving two-thirds of the wealth of the country of a charge which it ought to bear if it was to be made at all.

There was one other matter of real importance as regarded the demoralising tendency of the Bill. He insisted that the Bill as introduced would increase the tendency in the worst possible manner of the rural population to drift into the towns. What was wanted was some reform which would keep the labouring classes in the country districts. No one was a keener agitator for that than he was, because he believed that this drift of the rural population to the towns was one of the crying evils of the day, and must affect the whole

future of the people of this country. By this Bill London was to be made the dumping ground for all the waifs and strays of the country; and if the system was to be extended to the county boroughs, it would be impossible to conceive a more demoralising scheme as regarded the country districts. What was the remedy? The remedy which he, and those who thought with him, proposed, was so to improve their industrial organisation that they could keep their people fairly provided with employment in the country districts. Instead of that the Government invented this clap-trap remedy which, so far from really dealing with the evil, tended to increase the demoralisation and overcrowding in the great towns. He would like anyone to travel through the country districts in this land, and through the country districts in France, and see what a difference there was between the two. The moral to be deduced was that this Bill was a long step in the direction of pauperism. For his own part, there was nothing so sad as to see any man wishing to obtain employment and not able to get it; but were they likely to decrease the number of those unfortunates by the proposals in the present Bill? He had come to the conclusion that the tendency of these proposals would be rather to increase them. The Bill was a clap-trap palliative. No graver matter could be brought before the House, and he thought it his absolute duty to oppose to the utmost this demoralising Bill which the Government had introduced.

MR. KEIR HARDIE said that one phrase which had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down was significant of the opposition with which this modest measure was to be met by some of its opponents. The hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of the Bill as a clap-trap palliative, and showed in how small a way it touched the difficulties of the situation, and that, therefore, it did not deserve the approbation of the House. If he might be allowed, without offence, he should like to express his personal satisfaction that a Government had at length arisen which was prepared to make the unemployed question a matter of serious discussion in the House. It

afforded him and his colleagues of the Labour Party considerable satisfaction to find that such was the case. After listening to the cheers from the opposite side of the House which greeted the speech of the hon. Member for North Islington, he admitted that it said a great deal for the courage of the President of the Local Government Board that he had brought this measure to its Second Reading. [Ironical cheers.] He wished to give credit where credit was due. He would like also to express what he knew was a very general feeling outside that House amongst those who were trying to find some helpful solution of this difficulty—a very strong and high sense of appreciation of the right hon. Gentleman who was now Chief Secretary for Ireland, in having, practically on his own initiative, launched a scheme upon London which this Bill was about to legalise and establish, he hoped, all over the country. The arguments against the Bill had been more entertaining than convincing. When listening to the hon. Member for North Islington resurrecting bygone methods of dealing with labour problems, he was reminded of Old Mortality recutting the inscriptions on the tombstones of dead and gone political systems. He thought none the worse of the hon. Member for having the courage of his convictions; but he hoped that on this occasion there would be a sound of weeping in the division lobbies.

It had been said by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite that this Bill introduced a new principle, viz., that it conferred power on local authorities to find employment for the unemployed and to pay them wages. The hon. and learned Member emphasised the point and declared that the local boards of guardians at the present time had no power to authorise the spending of a single penny of the rates for that purpose. With all respect to the learning of the hon. and learned Gentleman, he submitted that he was wrong. He was sure that the President of the Local Government Board would agree with him that at the present time boards of guardians could, with the consent of the Local Government Board, acquire land for the express purpose of setting the un-

employed to work and pay them wages. These powers had existed in England since the days of Elizabeth. He held that the Poor Law of England was originally intended not to provide relief for the destitute. That was done by the Church as part of its duties. The Poor Law was established to create a new authority, as was now being done by this Bill, and to confer on that authority power to acquire land, to erect workshops, to set the able-bodied to work, and to pay them wages. Those powers had never been repealed and were still capable of being put into force. Therefore, it was a mistake to say that this Bill established a new principle. In providing work by law for the workless they were telling the thrifless that they must work if they wanted to live, and not, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stretford Division said, tell them they might live on their fellows. As for the men who would not work, he entirely agreed with St. Paul's doctrine, and if it could be applied to the Park Lane end of London there would not be so much need for applying it to the East End.

So far from the Bill acting as a magnet to draw the people from the country to the large centres of population, he believed it would operate in a contrary direction and open up avenues whereby the workless man in the city could find his way back to the country. Were it otherwise he would most strenuously oppose the measure. The whole trouble was that the country was being drained to the centres of population. He agreed with the Member for North Islington that clerks had a hard struggle to live. But that was because they were not paid a reasonable wage. To sweat clerks and then to protest against anything being done to help them was not the way to encourage these men to rely upon self-help. One statement of the President of the Local Government Board which was cheered on the Opposition side was that the Bill was not intended to apply to loafers and wasters. It was meant for the honest respectable man who could not find employment. At one time he feared that an attempt was being made to deal with the tramp and the loafer. If that had been done it would still leave

the root of the evil untouched. It was because the Bill aimed at a genuine development, and strove to prevent decent fellows from being driven into the gutter that it was worth support from all quarters of the House.

Respecting the present system of emigration it was a scandal that England had no better use for her sons than to banish them across the sea to grow food to send home to help the people in this country. He attended a Mansion House meeting the other day, and an Archbishop or a Bishop made a speech which clearly implied that Divine Providence did not understand His business, that in other parts of the world was waste land, which by the blessing of God belonged to England, and that idle men should be sent to idle land. Those who were born in England should not be called upon to leave so long as one rood of it lay waste and untilled. He hoped that one of the results of this Bill would be an ultimate enlargement of its scope whereby men who had been taken from the towns would be settled permanently upon the land, and grow food for the people of England from English soil. Some years ago the Poplar Board of Guardians accepted the offer of a farm in Essex in order to try the experiment of getting people back to the land. Able-bodied paupers were to be sent down to the farm to work there at no wages and to be treated as if they were in the workhouse so far as any yield from their labour was concerned. Yet during the time that farm colony had been in operation 400 men had been drafted down from the Poplar district, and out of that number only seven had proved to be people who would not work. A large proportion of them had been reclaimed, and had found employment, while a large batch had been sent across to Canada as desirable emigrants. If that could be done with material in the workhouse, already degraded and demoralised, what might not be done with those men who were taken in hand before they were pauperised and demoralised and given this opportunity? In the report of the Central Committee of the Unemployed Fund there was some very interesting information of another colony at Hollesley Bay, controlled by

that committee. In that case hundreds of men were sent down to do drainage and road work, to reclaim heath land, to construct sea walls, to make bricks, and to make tables and chairs and other articles, and to do painting. The cost was 20s. 6d., for every family relieved. As soon as a man was sent down to the colony his wife received 10s. a week, with 2s. for the first child, 1s. 6d. for the second, and 1s. for each remaining child. The average allowance to each wife was 14s. 6d., and the cost of the food of the man was 6s., against which there was a full week's work given by the man. The relief of these men, therefore, by finding them work cost nothing. They could earn their own cost, and possibly leave a surplus to assist in carrying on the colonies.

He trusted that no one would vote against the Bill because of any danger of making the nation bankrupt. There was no reason, however, why grants should not be made from the national Exchequer if the system did not pay expenses. Unemployment was national in scope, and should really be a national charge. He resented the statement that all the evils that fell upon the workmen were the outcome of improvidence. If they were all teetotalers to-morrow, and embodied all the virtues and elements of thrift, the unemployed question would still be present.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

————— EVENING SITTING. —————

UNEMPLOYED WORKMEN BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [20th June], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'it is most inexpedient for the national welfare, contrary to the best interests of the State, and especially detrimental to the poor themselves, by tending to reduce their self-reliance and independence, that a system of relief, whether supported by municipal rates

or Imperial taxation, be established in addition to and outside the existing Poor Law : ” —
(*Sir George Bartley.*)

[Question again proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.”

MR. KEIR HARDY, continuing his speech, said he now had one or two criticisms to make with regard to the Bill itself, and from the tone of his observations hitherto the President of the Board of Trade would see that he did not make them in any carping or hostile spirit. Although there was much to be said for the appointment of a central board to carry out the provisions of this Bill, he hoped he had gathered from the Government that afternoon that some understanding might yet be arrived at whereby it would not be compulsory to establish these new authorities all over the country. In a city like London, where the County Council had its hands already full of work, a new authority might be necessary; it would be a mistake to impose upon the County Council the duty of carrying out the provisions of this Bill. But that remark only applied to London; it did not apply to the rest of the country, where everybody would feel averse to the creation of a new set of officials which would be necessary if the Bill passed in its present form. They did not wish to multiply officials except in case of dire necessity, and therefore he hoped, if the special authority idea was to be maintained, that the suggestions made by one or two hon. Gentlemen would be considered, namely, that in connection with the new authority existing officials, such as town clerks, etc., should be utilised as far as possible in preference to creating brand-new officials. The Bill proposed that in country areas its provisions might be called into force by a resolution passed by the board of guardians or the local authority for that area, but that in those places where no such resolution was carried, and where the full provisions of the Bill were not called into being, a special committee of the county council should be required to be appointed to establish registers and so forth. That seemed to

him to point the way in which the necessity of creating a new authority might be avoided. If a committee of a county council was able to administer any portion of the Bill without a new authority being created, an elaboration of that idea would enable the same committee to carry out the full provisions of the Bill wherever it was thought desirable to do so. This arrangement applied also to county boroughs and district councils. In his opinion in the case of a town, a unit in itself, and not like London an aggregation of units, it would be a mistake to create these new authorities. A borough council was quite competent, and would be undoubtedly willing to exercise through a committee of its own all the powers conferred on it under this Bill. If that were done it would remove one of the objections to this measure, held very strongly by a good many councils and other people who desired to see the Bill passed, but who objected strongly, and in his opinion rightly, to the creation of anything like a new set of officials.

With regard to London itself the powers of the Bill might be vested in the borough councils, leaving the central authority to be created from representatives of those councils and of the County Council, with such co-opted members as might be agreed upon, because so far as London was concerned it was desirable that there should be a special authority which should be charged with the responsibility and the duty of putting the provisions of the Bill into operation. To make the county of London a model on which to build up new central bodies throughout the country was a mistake, and he hoped that upon this point also the President of the Local Government Board would keep an open mind. So far as London was concerned, it would, in his opinion, be a mistake and a great disadvantage to the proper working of the Bill if the County Council area, and not the Metropolitan Police area, was taken as the area. If the Metropolitan Police area was taken, the accessible bounds for the purposes of the Bill would be considerably enhanced, and such poor districts as South West Ham, which in this respect was one of the worst boroughs in England,

with a large proportion of unemployed and a low rateable valuation, would be able to cope more effectively with its responsibility. If West Ham had to depend upon itself to carry out the provisions of this Bill, it would immediately break down, but if, on the other hand, it was made part of the London area, then the outlying residential areas where the well-to-do mostly went to live, would be brought within the rating area and the cost of providing for the unemployed would be spread over a much wider area. A penny rate struck over the Metropolitan Police area would yield £30,000 a year more than if the London County Council area were taken as the unit.

He was pleased with the frank manner in which the President of the Board of Trade had explained the meaning of that section of the clause dealing with wages. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that it was not intended that the wages paid were to be under the current and fair rate, but that the total remuneration was to be less than would be earned by an ordinary workman under ordinary conditions. But if that were so, the clause as it stood would defeat that idea. The clause said that the total remuneration for any temporary work should be less than that earned by unskilled labour. Last winter the London Central Committee employed a considerable number of men in painting markets and doing certain classes of skilled work on the lines arranged by this Bill, but had this Bill been in force last winter those men would have come under the clause. Those men were paid the union rate of wages throughout, but had this Bill been law the wages earned by those men would have been confined to something under those earned by unskilled labour under ordinary conditions. That was a very serious thing and one which he hoped the President of the Local Government Board would consider and put right, because it could not for a moment be contended that simply because skilled work was done at a time of stress, out of season, in order to give employment to the unemployed, the wages of the persons doing that work should be less than those of unskilled labour. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be prepared to

accept an Amendment that the whole of that portion of the clause which dealt with wages should come out of the Bill. There was no reason whatever for its being in the Bill, and it only misled the people. He, therefore, hoped that that portion of the clause might be deleted in order that there might be no misconception of what the intention or the meaning of the Government was. After all, when the Bill became law, it would not be the intention of the Government, nor the speeches of the President of the Local Government Board, which would be held to show the meaning of the Act, but the words of the Act itself, and if this sub-section were left in it would be a very dangerous thing indeed, and might lead to great difficulties. Sub-section 6 of Clause 1 should also be varied to some extent, because it was never intended that the provisions of this Bill should allow private employment to be subsidised by a public authority. That sub-clause was capable of that interpretation, however, and that being so, it would be much better if that also were deleted. Failing the deletion of those two sub-sections he trusted that such Amendments would be accepted as would make it impossible for any of the dangers which he had indicated to arise.

There was one other point. The Bill said relief was not to be given in more than two successive years to one man. That required to be amended in some form or other; he quite agreed that there should be a limit to the period during which one could be a member of a labour colony or receive temporary work from other bodies established, but suppose the case of a man employed in December last year and January this year, that man would be employed during two years, and, therefore, would be disqualified from receiving further employment. Such a thing was out of the question, and some Amendment to that clause was required. Everyone was agreed as to the desirability of establishing labour bureaux, but he hoped that work would be undertaken upon some system. It was not enough to establish bureaux for the unemployed or labour exchanges all over the country. Unless they were co-ordinated they would lose much of their usefulness. In many parts of Germany the labour bureaux system

had been brought to the perfection of a fine art. By means of telephones and the Press the whole kingdom was posted up, and men were put into possession of information as to those employers who required workmen of their class, and they were even assisted from one place to another when work had been found for them. Something of that kind required to be done under this Bill. He knew, of course, there was a possibility of these bureaux being used as blackleg agencies where an employer might be enabled to obtain labour cheap and without difficulty, under the full protection of the Government, and something required to be done to safeguard these institutions from being prostituted in that way. Much had been said about the danger of this Bill doing too much for the working classes and of its being taken advantage of by the working classes, but the labour bureaux were far more likely to be abused by the employers than the working classes.

He trusted the Government would continue to do as they had hitherto done, steer an even keel between the opposition on both sides and pilot this measure safely into the harbour of Government legislation. A small measure it might be, but it would mean much to hundreds of thousands of men next winter and the winters to follow. Even at the present season, with the prospects of good trade, there were 5 per cent. of trades unionists on the unemployed benefit funds. During the summer months people managed to get a living somehow, but the dark dreary days of winter would come again, and then the number of the unemployed was always greater than in summer. For three winters in succession municipalities and charitable agencies had been strained to their utmost to tide the unemployed over their difficulties, and the House should remember that municipalities, though they might do it occasionally, could not go on for ever providing relief works for the unemployed. It had been stated that municipalities had a free hand for dealing with the unemployed. Such talk was misleading. The powers of the guardians were limited enough, but those of the municipalities were *nil*. The only power they had was to do certain work which might give employment

to some of the unemployed. Seeing that existing methods were practically exhausted it was doubly incumbent upon the House to back up the Government measure, in order that when winter came there should be machinery in existence for lightening to some extent the burden which fell upon decent men who were unable to find employment. When they realised what want of employment for weeks and months meant to men, women, and children, not only in the present but in the future, surely hon. Members should waive all preconceived theories spun out of the imagination of men who had been dead and gone hundreds of years. He, at any rate, would not take the responsibility, by act, word, or vote, of doing anything to hinder the passage of the Bill into law. If no provision were made for the coming winter, the cursings and groanings of the hungry and the dying, the despairing, and the suicides, might well embitter the lives of those who were responsible should they succeed in wrecking the Bill. It was only a beginning in the right direction, but still it was a beginning, and he hoped that the Government would stand by the position they had taken up, boldly declaring that having set their hands to this work of healing one of the gravest social sores in English political life they would not be daunted by opposition, but would see to it that the Bill was placed on the Statute-book before the session closed.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) said that in considering this subject he could not regard the present as a crisis. He could remember the time when combing machines were invented, one machine doing the work of eighty men, when power looms supplanted the hand-loom weaver, and the great cotton famine in Lancashire, and he was convinced there was no comparison between the difficulties of the present time and those which had then to be faced. But the difficulties of those days were overcome without any changes of a revolutionary character, and he believed that the difficulties of to-day could be surmounted with a similar absence of recourse to perilous experiments. He regretted that the intention of the Government to apply the Bill to county boroughs was not made clear at an earlier stage. During

the recess he had been in communication with the authorities of Bradford and Wigan, and had told them that as he understood the Bill it was practically a London Bill, though it was extremely possible that attempts would be made to extend it to the country generally.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR pointed out that Clause 2 clearly showed that the Bill was compulsory upon every county borough unless it made application to the Local Government Board for a postponement, and the Board granted such a postponement.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL agreed that that was the effect of the clause, but there had doubtless been widespread misapprehension on the point. He certainly did not regard with satisfaction the enormous powers which were given by the Bill to the Local Government Board to make Orders and regulations without having to come to Parliament. He never knew a Government which did not greatly love the system of proceeding by the system of Orders and regulations. The system doubtless had its proper place and value, but he thought the House of Commons ought to regard the granting of such powers with great jealousy, and insist upon Bills being made as wide and comprehensive as circumstances would admit. There was no doubt that in the course of years, possibly a very few years, this Bill would lead to great developments, and therefore not only the actual text of the measure should be considered, but also the modifications or extensions which were almost inevitable in the future. He regretted the creation of another authority. We already had a surfeit of authorities, and as one who had had considerable experience of the administration of the Poor Law he believed the existing methods of inquiry and existing machinery were sufficient for the purpose.

The House should note one great difference between the Poor Law authority and the proposed new authority—that the great object of the Poor Law was to use every legitimate means of persuasion to induce those in receipt of relief to help themselves in other ways, and cease to be a burden on the rates, while he was

afraid that the tendency of this legislation would be to encourage those who availed of it to continue in the employment of the local authority. The Bill, in fact, established and endowed a new dependent class of the community, and that was a departure, he thought, which was fraught with grave perils to the social system. If the Bill was to be really effective the work given must be work which would not otherwise be done, because if it were not so it would be simply change of employment and not new employment. That constituted a difficulty which had already been experienced, and he had in mind a large and progressive borough where there had been great difficulty in finding such employment by way of public works constructed out of rates. The Government desired to provide continuous labour. His curiosity was as to where the "continuous" labour was to end. If it was never to end it would not touch the unemployed, as the new authority would merely have a group of workpeople permanently in its employ just like any other employer of labour.

One great difficulty was the very feeble financial support which the Bill had. For instance, the borough of Bradford during the winter expended £17,000 in works, whereas the sum provided in the Bill was £6,000. And what would a farm colony be to a borough with 300,000 or 400,000 inhabitants? Another point was that if there was such a thing as scarcity of work—and they all knew there was—there was also such a thing as scarcity of labour. He knew an employer of labour some of whose hands refused to work for him because they thought they could better themselves by working for the corporation on works of a semi-artificial character. There was considerable danger in the fact that the labour set up under this Bill might be a severe and, to the public, a dangerous competitor with the labour of the independent employer. Such a consideration could not be overlooked. There was also the question of the vote. He viewed with apprehension the prospect of candidates rising in the dark days of October and endeavouring to obtain votes by promises of work.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): It was done on every Unionist platform in 1895.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL: I was never on a platform where utterance was given to such a doctrine.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: Old-age pensions in St. George's Hall, Bradford.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL said his last point was with regard to wages. It would be a serious mischief to the State if the wages and general conditions of labour obtaining for works executed under this Bill were such as to make workmen reluctant to enter the service of the private capitalist. The wage fund of the private employer was necessarily bounded by his prospect of remunerative return, but no such consideration need apply to the local authority; they could go on as long as the ratepayers chose to grant the money, and there was no end to the mischief which might ensue. Every Member of the House would feel the deepest sympathy and compassion for the unemployed. It was impossible to pass a portion of the winter in any of our large towns without feeling such sympathy and compassion—

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: Sympathy does not fill them.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL had no doubt that feeling was shared by the hon. Member who interrupted him. They ought not to allow their sympathy and compassion to overbear their judgment, because that would produce a worse state of affairs than that which they were now trying to remedy by legislation.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) said that all the speeches in opposition to the Bill had come from the supporters of the Government, and all those in favour of it, except the speeches of the introducer and the hon. Member for Mile End, had come from that side. They accepted the principle of the Bill as an honest, though small, attempt to deal with the welter of poverty and misery that settled at the base of our social system. The causes of unemployment were two, personal and industrial. Those who were out of work through their own defects were to be rightly left to the Poor Law.

Nobody denied that there were industrial causes for men being out of employment, wholly apart from personal causes, and the reason why he supported the principle of this Bill was because he was profoundly convinced that they would always have an unemployed problem. If they made every man in the country sober and intelligent, reformed the land laws, and reduced taxation to its lowest possible limit, if they established the system of protection which hon. Gentlemen opposite so much desired, if they were to limit the population by forbidding immigration and encouraging emigration,—every depression of trade, every invention of machinery or change of fashion would still give rise to an unemployed problem. What were they going to do under such circumstances? It had been said that this Bill was only a palliative and not a cure. He agreed that this measure was a palliative, but the unemployed problem was a disease for which there was no cure. Large numbers of men were frequently thrown out of employment through industrial causes for which the workmen could not be blamed. The great trade depression of 1893-4 came about partly through financial collapses in Australia and the Argentine, and the effects were felt in the back streets of London and Manchester amongst people who had never heard of the Argentine and who knew very little about Australia. Workmen could not be expected to make provision against such emergencies. It was the duty of society to make some effort to meet the case of those men who happened to be thrown out of work through no fault of their own. It seemed to him a monstrous thing that the State should acquiesce in the existing social system and make no effort to remedy this state of things which produced such intolerable suffering and distress in times of trade depression.

To deal with this problem three things were essential. In the first place any scheme for coping with the unemployed problem should set up permanent machinery, and that necessity was recognised in the Bill. Then the employment provided should not be so attractive as to draw or keep men from their ordinary employment. He believed

the safeguards in the Bill, which would be enforced by the regulations of the Local Government Board, would be amply sufficient for this purpose. In the third place, the measures adopted ought to have a proper variety and elasticity. In that respect the Bill appeared to him to be defective. It only proposed labour exchanges and farm colonies, unless, indeed, local authorities received voluntary gifts, which he thought would be unlikely when we began to draw on the rates. He was glad to see that the right hon. Gentleman now the Irish Secretary had been converted to the idea of farm colonies and labour exchanges. In a debate on this subject in 1903, he used language which was not favourable to those methods.

MR. WALTER LONG said the proposal in this Bill was that there should be farm colonies owned by the central authority. The proposal of which he spoke on the occasion referred to by the hon. Member for Cleveland was to substitute farm colonies all over the country for the Poor Law system.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL said that this Bill proposed to substitute farm colonies for the defects and deficiencies of the Poor Law system. The only objection, however, which he had to make to this part of the Bill was that it did not go far enough. He thought the labour exchanges would be an exceedingly useful part of the system, and although they did not create work they rendered the existing work more accessible. He thought, however, that these exchanges should be established upon an uniform system throughout the country, and they should be co-ordinated by a central authority. There would have to be a central agency to put all these exchanges into communication with one another. He had visited a farm colony connected with Paris, and one or two in this country, and he was convinced that they were an extremely useful refuge for men in times of distress. He did not think that they would ever be self-supporting, but the result achieved was well worth the cost, and in training town men for country labour they might do some good. The measure ought to be rendered more elastic. It ought to be

made possible for other forms of work to be put into operation for the relief of distress. Land reclamation was a case in point. Afforestation, also, might be ear-marked for the purpose of giving refuge to the unemployed in times of depression. Official inquiries had reported that large areas of waste land could be profitably planted with trees. They imported £21,000,000 worth of timber every year of a kind which could be grown in this country. France and other foreign countries had spent large sums of money upon the cultivation of trees, and had derived large profits. Private enterprise in this country was quite inadequate for this work, because the landowners had not sufficient available capital, and they could not afford to wait the time which would be necessary before they got any return for their outlay. He thought some Amendment might be inserted which would enable suitable afforestation schemes to be carried out if expert inquiry found that they were practicable.

All the proposals of the Bill were proposals for the employment of capable and willing workers, but there still remained the problem of the incapable and the unwilling workers. The present system of Poor Law relief for such classes was quite inadequate. The incapable ought to be employed on farm colonies, and the unwilling, the wastrels, and tramps ought to be employed on penal farm colonies. This course was advocated by men in sympathy with the working classes such as General Booth, Canon Barnett, and all the Labour Members who served on the Royal Commission on Labour, and many boards of guardians had been so much impressed by the success of such schemes in Holland and Belgium that they were urging the Local Government Board to give them power to establish penal colonies in this country. He agreed that it was a pity to set up new authorities, which would only cause additional expense for both offices and officers. He hoped that the Government, in spite of the opposition from their own side, would not drop this measure.

*MR. BOND (Nottingham, E.) said that he had been struck by the paucity of substantial argument brought forward in favour of the Bill. Since it had now

been found possible to set up machinery for dealing with crises on the spur of the moment, he did not see the necessity of setting up so dangerous a scheme as that propounded in the Bill. He was afraid that if the Bill passed, the tendency would be more and more to ignore the co-opted members of the local committees, and rely entirely upon those who came from the boards of guardians and the local authorities. Nor could he see there was any real necessity to set up permanent machinery, which meant a certain number of permanent officers and continuous expense, or to enter upon so dangerous a scheme as that proposed under the Bill merely in order to provide for contingent cases of distress, when they could practically improvise sufficiently for the purpose when occasion arose. They had the slenderest basis to go upon in determining that the formation of farm colonies was the proper way to employ funds raised from public sources. That was assuming much more than was proved. If the Bill were passed it seemed to be thought that they would get rid of the temptation on the part of local authorities to exercise their power of spending money. The Bill did not prohibit them from spending money. If it became recognised as part of our social system that the obligation did rest upon public bodies to find work for honest men out of employment and willing to take any job, the local authorities would be pressed by the committees to find work for the unemployed by doing summer jobs in the winter or substituting manual labour for what had been hitherto done by machinery, or breaking up roads which did not require to be broken up, or putting down asphalt where it did not require to be put down, or by other means which the local mind could devise to squander the ratepayers' money on unnecessary work.

He affirmed what had been said as to the doubtfulness and danger of this measure. Whenever he saw a project described as an "honest attempt" or an "interesting experiment," or whenever he heard the expression "proper safeguard," he knew he was on dangerous ground. They were the phrases by which people disguised from themselves and others their knowledge that

the attempt they described as "honest" was doomed to failure. When people talked about "proper safeguards" it was only an indication that they knew the measure was in itself mischievous, and the safeguards they described as "proper" absolutely sure to fail in obviating the mischief that was certain. The measure bristled with so-called safeguards. It would be utterly impossible for him to vote for it, and the utmost he could do to satisfy his feeling of Party loyalty was to abstain from voting.

MR. WALTER LONG, said he recognised the fact that each of the hon. Members who had spoken against the Bill on this side of the House had justly claimed on his own behalf great experience in dealing with social questions, but not one of them had made any practical proposal for meeting the difficulty to be dealt with. Sympathy for the unemployed workmen had been freely expressed, and by the hon. Member for Stretford in eloquent terms, who also said that he had a remedy. After this he listened with interest to his hon. friend, thinking to hear something of a practical kind which would show that the wrong line had been taken in October last. But what was the remedy? Such an alteration in our industrial system as would find employment for all. He entirely shared his hon. and learned friend's aspirations, but he would ask him and others who had criticised the Bill whether, if they had been at the Local Government Board last September, October, and November, they would have met those who came to the Board with a reply of that kind? It was not surprising that those who were attached to the principle of the old Poor Law should be chary of giving support to a measure they believed would be subversive of the principle followed since 1834. He would never have been responsible for the original preparation of the Bill if he had believed that it would be destructive of that administration of the Poor Law, which more than anything else had helped to build up the independence of our people. Unquestionably the reform of the Poor Law had been of the greatest value, and he would never have

lent his assistance to a Bill that would destroy that good work. He believed precisely the reverse would be the effect of the Bill, of which his hon. friend had spoken in contemptuous terms, using the word "clap-trap." His hon. friend was not well advised in using such language in reference to an honest attempt to deal with a practical difficulty.

The support given to the Bill by hon. Gentlemen opposite had not been altogether whole-hearted; it had been often associated with suggestions going much further than the Government were prepared to go. He doubted if hon. Members who had spoken against the Bill realised the position in October and November last. In London in more than one union boards of guardians found themselves unable to cope with the difficulties presented, and from many quarters came allegations that they were face to face with a labour crisis such as had never occurred before. He did not believe that, but he was impressed with the fact that a very large number of workmen anxious for work had to face starvation or the workhouse. Was that a condition of things to be met with the reply that the Poor Law and the workhouse made sufficient remedy for the suffering existing? His hon. friend the Member for Chelsea invited the House to say that nothing should be done until the existence of an enormous class of unemployed had become permanent and continuous. Did his hon. friend mean that the old rule that prevention was better than cure should not be applied in a difficulty of this kind? Surely it was wiser to face these facts, if facts they were, and provide machinery for dealing with them, rather than wait until an evil so serious had become permanent and continuous. He did not believe that they had reached a labour crisis, but he did believe that there was a great number of people out of employment and that there would be a great many more out of employment.

Some of the arguments used by his hon. friend who moved the rejection of the Bill were really arguments in favour of the Bill. His hon. friend said that since the passing of the Poor Law the condition of the people of this

country had been vastly improved, and the administration of the Poor Law had been improved. He begged the House not to run away with the idea that the increase in pauperism was due to lax administration. Both in the country districts and in the town districts the administration of the Poor Law had steadily and continuously improved. It was no use falling back on the excuse that there were bad boards of guardians. Occasionally there were bad Members of Parliament. Pauperism was not due to bad administration, nor did he say that it was due alone to the difficulties with which they were specially concerned that night. But, while the strict and benevolent administration of the Poor Law which had marked the last thirty years had taught the people to look upon the Poor Law as a means of relief that was not desirable, there was a lamentable defect in the system. The Poor Law had taken charge of the aged, the infirm, and the children, but it had done nothing, and had not attempted to do anything for what he would call weekly cases. They had not done so because they could not give relief in these cases without making a man and the members of his family paupers. It was because he desired to maintain the existing Poor Law system that he supported the principle of this Bill. He asked the House to support the Bill because the guardians could not deal with these weekly cases without adding to the number of paupers men and women who should not be made paupers. After all, pauperism was not a "raw material," to use a common phrase of the day. It was a manufactured article. It was manufactured out of conditions which, he was afraid, would always in some cases obtain. No doubt, as his hon. friend the Member for North Islington had pointed out, the large consumption of drink had a great deal to do with pauperism, but there were other excesses which had contributed to pauperism. If they rejected this Bill, in every case where a man was temporarily unable to maintain himself, they must either allow him to starve or turn him into a pauper.

SIR GEORGE BARTLEY: It is only pauperism under another name. The community gives relief.

MR. WALTER LONG said that if a man, who had been maintaining his wife and family, was through no fault of his own unable to find employment, there was no alternative under the present system except starvation on the one hand, or refuge in the Poor Law on the other. He asked those who had been connected with Poor Law administration how many men and women had they known who, once having gone on the Poor Law and entered the workhouse, had been raised from that condition and again become self-supporting citizens? How could guardians help a man to become self-supporting again? What kind of work could they give him? Could there be any work which was less satisfactory and less likely to make a man become self-supporting than the stone-yard? His hon. friend who moved the Amendment spoke of the unremunerative character of the work which would be provided under a Bill of this kind, but what was the kind of work provided by local guardians? How could they provide work without competing with local industry? The result was that they had to fall back on stone-yards and similar expedients. Many a man had told him that when he entered on his career of destitution the fact that he had been put to polish the same brass knob, or to clean the same window which half-a-dozen had cleaned before, degraded him.

Was there no justification for the steps which he took last winter to meet that difficulty? He did not admit that there was a crisis then, but there were undoubtedly difficulties, as was shown by the figures in connection with the increase of pauperism in the country. The figures showed that there had been a great and steady increase in the number of paupers in the country since 1900. He did not take those figures as in themselves absolutely reliable, and in the first week of October he instituted confidential inquiries of his own all over the country, and the conclusion he came to was that there was a very considerable number of men ready, anxious, and willing to work, for whom no employment could be found. In London he found not only that there was an increasing number of unemployed, but that there

was absolute chaos as to any system of dealing with the difficulty. His hon. friend the Member for Wigan, whose long experience of Poor Law administration entitled him to be listened to on the subject with the greatest respect, had criticised the creation of new authorities under the Bill, but he would ask what proposal was there that could be made for dealing with the problem that did not necessarily involve the setting up of a central authority? It was the lack of centralised machinery, of the means of testing each case, that had led to hopeless overlapping and confusion in the past. If they were not to set up a separate authority, it was impossible to avoid overlapping such as had occurred in past schemes. It had also been said the Bill was unsatisfactory because it would attract a large number of unemployed from the country districts into London, but that statement ignored the stipulation as to residence for six or twelve months. His right hon. friend would be inclined to twelve months residence; last winter the regulation was not less than six months. His right hon. friend indicated that in order to prevent anything of that kind he would be willing to consider favourably an Amendment which would put the municipal authorities of the country on all fours with the Metropolis.

It was remarkable to find so much opposition to the principle proposed, because, after they had established their scheme in the Metropolis last year, it was gratefully received by all classes, and many municipalities made urgent appeals for similar powers. Where the area was large and the population considerable there must be a central body to lay down general principles and local bodies to distinguish between deserving and undeserving cases. He did not believe the work could be done by central bodies unassisted. He did not think hon. Gentlemen who criticised their attempt to deal with this difficulty realised the position of the Minister who was approached by municipalities who said they were face to face with the fact that their town was full of unemployed and starvation threatened men, women, and children, and that they were not prepared to stand by and see a large portion

of their population, who were deserving, made paupers, and therefore proposed to relieve them by carrying out municipal work. There could not be a worse way of dealing with the unemployed than that, because bad value was given for the money expended. The men who acted under a municipality understood the course of employment, and whether the ordinary workman was good or bad. But if all the unemployed were to be given work without discrimination the result was sure to be unsatisfactory. Of

course, there had been mistakes, but they were not due to the fact that there was a new central body, but to the fact that in the face of a sudden crisis it was necessary to call into existence a new body which had neither officers nor machinery, and which was obliged to do the best it could in a very serious condition of things. If there was a body established on the main lines of the Bill there would be machinery ready to hand before the difficulty arose. It was said that this involved great extravagance, and would add fresh burdens to the rates; but there were now being spent in London and the great municipalities vast sums of money which were spent extravagantly and without any good results to those who were employed. Once there was a body prepared with the staff and machinery he believed that the mistakes which had been committed would diminish, if not altogether disappear.

A good deal of criticism had been addressed to the suggestion to set up farm colonies. It was a most extraordinary thing that up to the present we had no central machinery by which emigration could be organised. There was nothing but voluntary agencies. If there was a central body to deal with emigration, with power, first of all, to put men on a farm colony for a time, and then to migrate them to parts of the country where labour was wanted or to emigrate them to the Colonies, he believed it would effect a great improvement.

To come back to what he started with, anybody who found the condition of things with which he had had to deal and was confronted with the practical difficulties of boards of guardians and local authorities all over the country, might have done better than he had, but certainly could not

have done less, and would have felt bound to recommend that that experience should find expression in legislation. Although there had been much criticism there had been no practical suggestion for dealing with this difficulty. He was certain that it was not sufficient to tell working men who were out of employment through no fault of their own that there was for them the workhouse and the relieving officer. They believed that it was possible to organise for their temporary relief, and he also believed that it was possible without in the smallest degree weakening the foundations on which the Poor Law system stood. Unless some such reform were adopted these men would become gravely discontented. If the conditions of life in our great towns exposed the wage-earning classes to this difficulty—that at certain times, through no fault of their own, they could get no employment—and if machinery could be set up to secure that employment, it seemed no great demand to make on the country to ask for those powers. He would never have made himself responsible for the scheme of last year if he had thought it would weaken the foundations on which our Poor Law system rested. It was because he believed that it would be impossible to maintain that system without some reform of this kind that he urged the acceptance of the Bill by the House of Commons.

MR. CROOKS said that personally, and he knew he was also speaking on behalf of many boards of guardians, he desired to congratulate the present President of the Local Government Board and the Chief Secretary for Ireland on their attempt to deal with this difficult problem. When the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland called a conference last year, he did not believe in it because he never thought that the right hon. Gentleman would have the courage to follow it up with a practical scheme. He did not wonder at the hon. Member for North Islington, who was an old-fashioned gentleman and represented the old system, seizing the opportunity of teaching boards of guardians to do their duty, and preaching to poor people the gospel of thrift. He wished that the hon. Member could realise that, after all, they had to deal

with a large industrial army, and that it was the duty of the Government to keep that industrial army up to the fighting pitch.

The Amendment spoke of the proposals of the Bill as being detrimental to the interests of the poor. Could anything be more detrimental to the poor than keeping them without food? The hon. Member for North Islington had delivered a little homily about the powers of borrowing conferred by the Bill on municipal authorities; but where was the hon. Gentleman, who was a considerable authority in banking, to get his dividends from without borrowing. Banks flourished on borrowings. It appeared to him, when the hon. Gentleman denounced borrowing, to be like Satan rebuking sin. Last winter £50,000 was spent from the Mansion House Fund, and £111,000 in providing work for the unemployed. What he wanted the House to consider was that, even if the work provided for the unemployed by the local authorities during last winter had cost 25 per cent. more than it would have cost under ordinary circumstances, it was a distinct advantage to the community to pay that 25 per cent. over and above, because otherwise these men would have come on the rates, the community would have been 60 per cent. out of pocket, and there would have been no work done at all. It had been said that the pauper was a lazy man, but lazy men were not confined to one class. They knew that there were men very well off who thought it degrading to work. He would have every man work in order to add to the wealth of the nation. Should an ordinary unemployed man be left to the tender mercies of the Poor Law when he could go into Victoria Park and work for 7d. per hour. Would they call such a man lazy? He ventured to say that there were a good many men in this country who would not go and do that work for 7d. per hour. What was wanted was to lift the people up and prevent them becoming a charge on the Poor Law. Every depression in trade left behind it a certain number of men and women who were the dregs of the community; and the moment they became associated with the Poor Law, they gradually sank in the social scale.

The consequence was there was never any improvement in their lives. They became accustomed to the workhouse, and they did not care who knew that they were paupers. Surely it was time that an attempt should be made to prevent men and women from becoming so degraded; and he appealed to the patriotism of the House to assist in that by supporting this Bill.

During last winter, when he broke down, and was unable to go on any longer trying to get work for poor men and women, he was lying on his bed—he lived in a narrow street twenty feet wide—and looking out of the window he saw on the opposite side of the road a man as upright as if he were in the Guards and with a soldierly bearing, wearily waiting for a chance of work. The man took out of his pocket a whistle and commenced to play. And what did they think he played? “See the conquering hero comes.” [Laughter.] Hon. Members laughed, but here was one of the nation’s warriors. Who was his conquering hero? Starvation! Was there to be no attempt made to keep up the manhood of such men? In the middle of last summer a man came to his door and asked him to buy a mat. He told him that he had plenty of mats, and the man replied, “For Christ’s sake, buy a mat, sir. What am I to do? I have walked about all day wheeling this load of mats, and I have not taken a penny.” Of course he could not resist giving the man something. They could not call that man lazy, and was nothing to be done for such men? This Bill would give them a chance of sending such men to do some useful work. There were millions of acres of land in this country upon which men could be employed, but it had been left to an American philanthropist to buy land in this country and offer it to Poor Law guardians to make the experiment as to whether men could be made men or whether they should always remain wastrels. The board of guardians with which he was connected had been working one of these farms for nearly a year, and they were employing nearly 400 men successfully. If they could give men something useful to do, then they would take a pride in

their work. What a delightful occupation stone-breaking and oakum-picking was for men who wanted to do useful work. It cost the ratepayers £10 a ton for picking oakum and then they had to give it away. It required more than ordinary statesmanship to organise work of that character. He thought they might have heard something more from hon. Gentlemen opposite in favour of this Bill. There was nothing a workman detested more than labour which was intended to kill time. They had, no doubt, heard of the sailor who said he would rather do anything in the world than go to sea. He was given a job wheeling stones from one side of the road to the other. He was afterwards ordered to wheel them back again, and then the sailor declared that he would sooner go to sea. Workmen hated to waste their time, and such employment as he had alluded to was simply sapping all the manhood out of the very people which they were most anxious to save. Was it not time that some attempt was made to rescue these men? At the farm he had referred to they had turned out forty men who had obtained agricultural work. Twenty-five of them had gone to Canada, and they had heard that they were doing well. In this way they were making men of these people, and the House of Commons ought to pay some regard to preserving their manhood.

He did not agree that all the work done by the Unemployed Committee in London last winter had been wasted energy. The central committee created by the present Chief Secretary for Ireland found themselves in possession of £40,000 subscribed by the public for the unemployed, and people complaining that they had no work; and by means of this fund they were able to provide altogether 16,000 weeks work for those out of employment. The proper time to arrange for trade depression was when everything was going on comfortably, and they ought not to wait till things were bad. He agreed that some of the money spent upon the unemployed last winter was lost, but at any rate it enabled a large number of workmen to keep their homes together. So long as men were usefully employed they became better men. They had

been asked what they were going to do with the clerks. There were thousands of men in all big towns who from ill-health were unable to work at indoor employment. Often men were thrown out of employment through improvements in machinery. It would pay the nation to spend a little money on training the unemployed of London in agriculture on farm colonies. At present the ordinary unemployed workman of London was no use at farm work. The farmer would not be bothered with him. But if he were trained for, say, two years on a farm colony, he would become a useful agricultural labourer and thus help to supply a sore want in the country districts.

Not long ago the London County Council invited the representatives of all the Metropolitan borough councils to a conference, and an executive committee of fifteen members presided over by the hon. Member for Battersea was appointed. This committee finally recommended the establishment of a more complete industrial organisation, and urged upon the Government the desirability of providing such an organisation throughout the country. The Bill now before the House had met the terms of the resolution which was adopted by the London County Council. They now asked that this Bill should be made compulsory all over the country. He thought that if they insisted upon each county area dealing with its own unemployed they would prevent migration from one county to another. The late Lord Salisbury once said that it was not so much votes that the people wanted in the country as swings and roundabouts. What they wanted in the country was more life in order to attract people to the land. Here was a great opportunity for a few landlords to put up decent cottages on their land in order to attract people to the country. They should remember that the patriotism of a nation began in the kitchen where the people had their food. If the people were able to get sufficient food they would become proud of their country. He hoped the Second Reading would be carried without a division or at any rate by such a substantial majority as would encourage the Government to press the

Bill through the House. If the measure was made compulsory throughout the country it would be the foundation of a great improvement in the condition of industrial classes.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) pointed out that the intention of the Bill was to give power to the new authority to deal with exceptional circumstances of distress, not to educate people so that they might earn a livelihood. He opposed the Bill because he felt that it would not only not do good, but would do harm. Not a single illustration had been adduced by hon. Members on the other side of the House who had supported the Bill of a measure identical with this which had been successful. The hon. Member for Woolwich said that ordinary work could be found for people under this Bill, that farm colonies could be started, and that millions of acres of land could be devoted to providing work for the unemployed. He would like to know what would happen to the people who were now working on that land? Ridicule had been cast upon certain Members who had opposed this Bill, and they had been accused of doing nothing but expressing their sympathy with the unemployed. He opposed this Bill not because he was out of sympathy with the unemployed, but because he thought this measure would do more harm than good. That was the reason why they were opposing this Bill. The only way to judge any such measure as this was to look back in order to see if any such measure had been introduced

before, and what had been the result. If such a Bill was likely to prevent distress, why had it not been introduced before? A measure of this kind was introduced in the days of the Ancient Romans, and it was such a measure that brought about the fall of that great Empire. Another example was what occurred in Paris in 1848. With regard to farm colonies a Report issued by the Board of Trade in 1903-4 showed that labour colonies abroad had not been successful in dealing with the unemployed question. [Cries of "Divide."] That Report was hostile to the policy which was proposed in this Bill. [Renewed cries of "Divide."] There was nothing in what had been hitherto done by the borough councils which would lead men to believe that they could go to a borough council and demand work. Under this Bill for the first time in the history of England the principle was being established that the State should provide work for the unemployed.

Mr. CROOKS rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 228; Noes, 11. (Division List No. 200.)

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)	Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel	Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)	Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.	Arrol, Sir William
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte	Anson, Sir William Reynell	Atherley-Jones, L.

Mr. Crooks.

Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Josceline-FitzRoy
 Bailey, James (Walworth)
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Mane'r
 Balfour, Rt.HnGeraldW.(Leeds
 Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
 Banner, John S. Harmood-
 Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
 Bell, Richard
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Bhownaggee, Sir M.M.
 Bignold, Sir Arthur
 Bingham, Lord
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bousfield, William Robert
 Brigg, John
 Broadhurst, Henry
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
 Bull, William James
 Burke, E. Haviland
 Burns, John
 Burt, Thomas
 Butcher, John George
 Buxton, N.E.(York,NR,Whitby
 Buxton, Sydney Chas.(Poplar)
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
 Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
 Chamberlain, Rt.Hn.J.A.(Worc.
 Chapman, Edward
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Clive, Captain Percy A.
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
 Cremer, William Randal
 Crooks, William
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Delany, William
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark
 Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
 Duke, Henry Edward
 Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
 Edwards, Frank
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan
 Fellows, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
 Fenwick, Charles
 Fergusson, Rt.Hn.Sir J.(Mane'r
 Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
 Findlay, Alexander(LanarkNE
 Finlay, Sir R.B.(Inv'rn'ssB'ghs
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Flower, Sir Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gardner, Ernest
 Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
 Gordon, Hn. J.E.(Elgin&Nairn
 Gordon, Maj. Evans (Tr'H'm'sts

Grant, Corrie
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Greene,SirE.W.(B'rySEdm'nds
 Guthrie, Walter Murray
 Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
 Hamilton, Marq. (L'nd'nderry)
 Harcourt, Lewis
 Hardie,J.Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Hay, Hn. Claude George
 Helme, Norval Watson
 Henderson, Sir A.(Stafford, W.
 Henderson, Arthur (Durham
 Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
 Higham, John Sharp
 Hoare, Sir Samuel
 Hogg, Lindsay
 Holland, Sir William Henry
 Hope, J.F.(Sheffield,Brightside
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry C
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred
 Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kenyon-Slaney,Rt. Hn.Col.W.
 Kerr, John
 Keswick, William
 Lamont, Norman
 Langley, Batty
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow
 Lawrence, Sir J. (Monm'th)
 Lawson, Hn. H.L.W.(Mile End
 Lawson, John Grant(YorksNR
 Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
 Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
 Lease, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leigh, Sir Joseph
 Levy, Maurice
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Llewellyn, Evan Henry
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
 Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Bristol, S.)
 Lough, Thomas
 Lucas,ReginaldJ.(Portsmouth
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hn. Alfred
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
 Maconochie, A. W.
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Arthur, Chas. (Liverpool)
 M'Crae, George
 M'Killop, Jas. (Stirlingshire)
 M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
 Majendie, James A. H.
 Malcolm, Ian
 Manners, Lord Cecil
 Markham, Arthur Basil
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Milner, Rt. Hn. Sir Fredk. G.
 Milvain, Thomas
 Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.
 Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Moss, Samuel
 Mount, William Arthur
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)

Nannetti, Joseph P.
 Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
 O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Malley, William
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Parrott, William
 Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
 Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Randles, John S.
 Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
 Rea, Russell
 Renwick, George
 Richards, Thomas
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Round, Rt. Hon. James
 Runciman, Walter
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire
 Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
 Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse
 Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
 Seely, Maj. J.E.B.(Isle of Wight
 Shackleton, David James
 Shaw, Charles Edw (Stafford)
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Slack, John Bamford
 Sloan, Thomas Henry
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soares, Ernest J.
 Spear, John Ward
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip James
 Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs
 Sullivan, Donal
 Talbot, Lord E (Chichester)
 Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomkinson, James
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Tuff, Charles
 Villiers, Ernest Amherst
 Vincent, Col.Sir C.E.H.(Sheffield
 Walker, Col. William Hall
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
 Warde, Colonel C. E.
 Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E.(Taunton
 White, Luke (York, E.R.)
 Whiteley, George (York, W.R.
 Whiteley, H.(Ashton and Lyne
 Williams, Osmond (Merioneth
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset

Wilson, John (Falkirk)	Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.	TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
Wilson, John (Glasgow)	Younger, William	Alexander Acland-Hood and
Wylie, Alexander	Xoxall, James Henry	Viscount Valentia

NOES.

Banbury, Sir Frederick George	Legge, Col. Hn. Heneage	Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R
Coghill, Douglas Harry	Pilkington, Colonel Richard	
Cripps, Charles Alfred	Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)	TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
Eve, Harry Trelawney	Russell, T. W.	George Bartley and Mr.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)	Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)	Whitmore.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR claimed, "That the main Question be now put."

Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

PROTECTION OF LIFE FROM FIRE.

Ordered, That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire as to the provision of means of escape from fire in factories, workshops, laundries, offices, shops, hotels, and other buildings where persons work or live in large numbers, and to report what changes in the law are necessary for the protection of life, having special regard to the case of buildings in the occupation of more than one occupier.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of: Mr. Arkwright, Mr. James Bailey, Mr. Brigg, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. Vincent Kennedy, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Norman, Mr. Ridley, Mr. Soames, and Mr. Tuff.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.—
(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

NEW CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington), in moving the adjournment of the House, said it would be necessary at the commencement of business that day (Wednesday) to move that the House do appoint a new Chairman of Ways and Means. For that purpose it would be necessary that some Vote of Supply should be the first order of the day. He would, therefore, put down Class I, Vote 12, Peterhead Harbour, which he believed was non-contentious. It was in accordance with precedent that notice should be now given that the First Lord of the Treasury would move "That Mr. Grant Lawson do take the chair." If that Resolution was carried Progress would be immediately reported, and the House would be asked to go into Committee upon the proposal for a Vote for a pension for the late Speaker. The business immediately afterwards would be the Indian Budget, and the Secretary of State would make his statement of revenue and expenditure with the Speaker in the Chair.

Question, "That this House do now adjourn"—(*Sir A. Acland Hood*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at twenty - seven minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 21st June, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Croydon Corporation Bill; Stockport Corporation Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Barry Railway Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

Clacton Improvement Bill [Lords]; Dearne Valley Railway Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Metropolitan Railway Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

North British Railway (General Powers) Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Rathmines and Rathgar Extension and Improvement Bill. To be read the third time To-morrow.

Shropshire, Worcestershire, and Staffordshire Electric Power Bill. Read the third time, and passed. [New Title.]

London County Council (Money) Bill; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Barrymore Estate Bill [Lords]; Donovan's Divorce Bill [Lords]; North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Millport Piers and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. Read a second time; to be considered upon Friday.

VOL. CXLVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill; Hythe Corporation Bill [Lords]; Stepney Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Leven's Patent Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

Darien Gold Mining Company Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

PETITIONS.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Abernethy, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

Petition from Camberwell, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION BILL.

Petition from St. Marylebone, against; to lie upon the Table.

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Petition of the Trustees of the British Museum, for grant in aid [presented February 28th]; referred to the Committee of Supply.—(*Mr. John Morley.*)

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the year 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (CODE, 1905).

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools, with Schedules, by the Board of Education, 1905 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Order amending Final Order, No. 1130, made under Section 11 (8) of The Education Act, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FINANCE ACCOUNTS.

Copy presented, of Finance Accounts of the United Kingdom for the year ended March 31st, 1905 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 200.]

CIVIL LIST PENSIONS.

Copy presented, of List of all Pensions granted during the year ended March 31st, 1905, and payable under the provisions of Section 9 (1) of The Civil List Act, 1901 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 201.]

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Local Loans Fund. Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Local Loans Fund for the year ended March 31st, 1904, with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 202.]

NEW WRITS.

For Borough of Finsbury (East Division), in the room of Henry Charles Richards, esquire, deceased; County of Stafford (Kingswinford Division), Colonel William George Webb, deceased.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Income-Tax Committee—Publication of Report.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Report of the Committee appointed to consider certain questions affecting the income-tax will be presented.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) This Report will be laid to-day.

Scottish Board of Manufactures—Pending Legislation.

SIR J. STIRLING-MAXWELL (Glasgow, College): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether the Government propose to introduce legislation this session to give effect to the Report of the Committee on the Board of Manufactures.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) A Bill is in course of preparation, and will be introduced this session if the state of business permits.

Fishery Board Cruisers and Illegal Trawling off the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Lord-Advocate if he will state how many Fishery Board cruisers have been engaged this year off the coast of the Island of Lewis in protecting the interests of line fishermen against the depredations of illegal trawlers, and the names of the vessels so engaged.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) There have been four, their names being "Freya," "Brenda," "Ninna," and "Vigilant."

Erection of Houses on Farm of Aignish, Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Lord-Advocate, having regard to the fact that the farm of Aignish, Island of Lewis, has been broken up into thirty-two crofts, will he state when the erection of houses on the respective crofts will be proceeded with.

(*Answered by Mr. Scott Dickson.*) I am informed that the work is being proceeded with. On June 8th the foundations of eighteen of the houses had been excavated, and concrete foundations were being put in.

Delay in Construction of Canton-Kowloon Railway.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, seeing that the preliminary contract for the Canton-Kowloon Railway was signed in the spring of 1899, will he state the cause of the delay in proceeding with the construction of the line.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) As stated in my Answer to the hon. Member on

February 10th,† 1904, negotiations for the conclusion of the final agreement for the construction of the Canton-Kowloon line were to be postponed until arrangements had been made for financing the Shanghai-Nanking Railway. Since the conclusion of these arrangements, negotiations for the final contract of the Canton line have been resumed, and His Majesty's Government have urged upon the Chinese Government the importance of an early settlement.

Progress in Building of Canton-Hankow Railway.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state what progress has been made with the Canton-Hankow trunk line of railway.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) So far as we are aware, no substantial progress has yet been made in the building of the line.

Woolacombe (North Devon) Water Supply.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that the water supply of Woolacombe, North Devon, has been condemned by the medical officer of health as unfit for drinking and all domestic purposes; whether any arrangements have been made for obtaining a fresh water supply; and whether any warning has been issued or will be issued to the inhabitants and visitors, pointing out the danger to public health arising from the use of the present supply.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) My attention has been called to the unsatisfactory character of the water supply referred to. The Ilfracombe Urban District Council, within whose limits of supply Woolacombe is situate, propose to construct works in order to afford a new supply of water to that place. They have applied to the Local Government Board for sanction to borrow money for the purpose, and a local inquiry has been held on the subject by one of the Board's inspectors. The inspector is now engaged

on his report. I am unable to answer the last part of the Question.

Army Pensions—Case of William Simmonds, late Royal Field Artillery.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that William Simmonds, late No. 1,669 Royal Field Artillery, was enlisted on 8th June, 1858, and served twelve years in the Army and five years in the Reserve; that the Articles of War at that time stated that any soldier serving his first period may, on the recommendation of his commanding officer, at the age of fifty become entitled to a pension of 6d. a day; and that applications by William Simmonds to be recommended for this pension have been refused on the ground that he only served twelve years with the colours; and whether, seeing that Simmonds is now sixty-seven years old and unable to obtain work, he will consider the desirability of granting him a pension of 6d. a day.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.*) This man's application for a pension was considered by the Commissioners of Chelsea Hospital in June, 1904, and he was then informed that his service did not render him eligible for any pension from Army funds. In order to qualify for a deferred pension the Royal Warrant of 1st July, 1848 (not the Articles of War) required a minimum of fourteen years actual service with the colours, whereas Simmonds gave twelve years one month only. As he took part in no campaign he is not eligible for a special campaign pension, and there is no other class of pension for which he can be considered.

Government Redistribution Proposals.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state the day on which he proposes to introduce the proposals, referred to in His Majesty's Speech from the Throne, for diminishing the anomalies in the present arrangement of electoral areas.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) In the present condition of public business I fear I cannot appoint a day for introducing the proposals in question.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxxix., 852.

The Ministry of Commerce—Government Proposals.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to state when he proposes to introduce the measure, promised in His Majesty's Speech from the Throne, to raise the *status* of the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade, and to create a Minister of Commerce.

(Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.) I am afraid I cannot at present mention a day for the introduction of this measure; but due notice will be given.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Royalty payable by the Hyderabad (Deccan) Company.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAG-GREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of the Nizam reduced the royalty payable by the Hyderabad (Deccan) Company last year from four annas to one anna; and whether, in consequence of this reduction, the royalty fell in 1904 to £2,622, as against £9,727 recovered in 1903, causing a loss to the Hyderabad State of upwards of a lac of rupees; and, if so, will he state if this reduction in the rate of royalty was effected with the concurrence of the officer of the Government of India who advises the Nizam on financial matters, together with the reasons which prompted the reduction in question.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The Nizam's Government informed the Government of India in May, 1904, that they had decided to offer to the Hyderabad (Deccan) Company a reduction of the royalty payable by the company under the terms of the Singareni Coalfield lease to a fixed and uniform rate of two Halli Sicca annas per ton, and that the arrangement proposed had been accepted by the company. The reason given by the Nizam's Government was the lengthy and intricate character of the rules for assessing the royalty which were framed in 1893. I am not aware whether the Financial Secretary

to the Nizam was consulted in the matter, nor have I received any report as to the financial effect of the new rate.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAG-GREE: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire if the Financial Secretary's advice was asked?

MR. BRODRICK: I will inquire.

Motor-Car Horns and Sunday Services.

CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews-Burghs): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware of the annoyance caused to ministers and their congregations in the Metropolis by the constant hooting of motor-car horns during the hours of divine service on Sundays; and whether he will take steps to protect the public from this annoyance.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have not received any complaints as to the annoyance referred to. The regulation requiring the driver of a motor-car whenever necessary by sounding his horn or bell to give warning of the approach or position of the car is intended to secure the public safety, and it would be difficult to make exceptions to it. But I hope that motorists generally will recognise the propriety of avoiding as far as possible the need for sounding a horn in the immediate neighbourhood of a church or chapel during the hours of divine service on Sundays.

The Military Stores Report.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for War a Question of which I have given him private notice—namely, when the firms of Meyer (Limited) and Wilson & Worthington ceased to be contractors for the military authorities in South Africa; on whose authority the Press censors in South Africa prevented the publication of criticism on the contracts for the sale of supplies; and whether he will at once reappoint Sir William Butler's Committee with instructions to inquire further into all military

contracts made in South Africa since the close of the war.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): In reply to the first Question, I ask leave to correct the Answer which I gave to a Question put to me yesterday without notice. I find that there are still some running contracts which have not yet been terminated, but I should add that immediately upon the discovery of the unsatisfactory nature of the transactions which have taken place with the firms referred to, I gave instructions that no further contracts were to be made with either of them. As regards the second part of the Question, there appears to be some misapprehension, as all restrictions on telegraphic correspondence to and from South Africa were removed on July 21st, 1902. In reply to the third Question, I think that, in view of the further inquiry which is desired by the House, and which is contemplated by the Government, it is not necessary that Sir William Butler's Committee should continue its labours. I am confident that the proposed inquiry will be more satisfactory than any which can be carried on by the Committee, and, under these circumstances, I shall discontinue the Committee as soon as a conclusion has been arrived at. Had it not been for the establishment of another tribunal, I should certainly have authorised Sir William Butler's Committee to continue and to complete its work.

MR. WHITLEY: May I ask further, with regard to the existing contracts with these firms, can the Secretary for War give us the date at which his order was sent forbidding further contracts to be entered into; and with regard to the action of the Press censors, his reply appears to me to refer only to telegraphic communications between the Transvaal and this country, whereas my Question was directed to the prevention of references appearing in the local newspapers in the Transvaal regarding these contracts. It has already been stated by one of the newspapers concerned that they were prevented by the Press censors from criticising as they wished to do these contracts soon

after they had been made, in the last three months of 1902.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The order that no further contract should be made was sent by me on June 1st of this year.

MR. WHITLEY: This year?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, Sir, this year. With regard to the question of the censorship, I have answered the hon. Member's Question as I understood it. I know of no regulations in Pretoria which could have over-ridden our instructions. It is a fact that all communications were free and open, and no difficulty was experienced in sending any communications by telegraphic or other channels from Pretoria at that time.

MR. WHITLEY: Were the local papers in Pretoria not subject to a censorship?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am quite unaware of that fact. If the hon. Member wishes for the information I will ascertain.

MR. WHITLEY: I will put a further Question.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): Were these contracts of Meyer and Worthington annual contracts or nine months contracts? When did they begin and when do they stop? Are they going on at the present moment?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: They are going on. They were contracts accepted by open tender very early in the year and were for supplying the troops in certain localities with milk and groceries for the year. They were very small contracts.

MR. PIRIE: Made this year?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes.

MR. WHITLEY: These contracts were entered into six or eight months after the Auditor-General had drawn attention to the nature of the previous transactions with these firms.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes; that is so. These contracts with existing firms in South Africa were entered into in the

ordinary way locally for current supplies and they were accepted on the lowest tender.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): When the present contracts expire will care be taken that new contracts are not given to the same persons under another alias?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think I have given evidence of my views about that. The moment I ascertained that there was any possible charge against these contractors I gave instructions that no further contracts should be given to them.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Will the Prime Minister say what Cabinet Ministers were primarily responsible for sanctioning the sending of war supplies to South Africa for at least eight months after the war was over and authorising the sale of the supplies accumulated in South Africa and of those that arrived subsequently and the making of local contracts for the supply of the troops? Are these Ministers still members of the Government; does the Prime Minister intend to ask them to resign; and was he personally responsible for any of these matters?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The hon. Gentleman is not a young and inexperienced Member of this House, and is probably sufficiently acquainted with our political system to know that the First Lord of the Treasury for the time being does not add to his multifarious duties that of supervising contracts for meat or milk in connection with military operations.

MR. LOUGH: No milk was sent out. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Tea."]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman asks me whether any other Cabinet Minister was primarily responsible for sanctioning the sending of war materials to South Africa at least eight months after the war had finished and authorising the disposal of supplies in

South Africa. To that I can only say that the hon. Gentleman is labouring under a profound mistake if he thinks that precautions were not taken by the then heads of the War Office with regard both to the supplies sent to South Africa after the war and the supervision and sale of those supplies in South Africa. It may not perhaps have occurred to the hon. Gentleman that when a war suddenly comes to a conclusion the machinery for supplying an immense army in a foreign theatre of war cannot be shut down by the mere fiat of any Minister or any Department. The hon. Gentleman talks of sending supplies eight months after the war. The last supply ship sailed from this country, I believe, on July 5th, 1902; and although the hon. Gentleman could not be acquainted with the fact, it is nevertheless true that precautions were taken both with regard to the sale of stores to the South African authorities and with regard to the sale of stores in South Africa to other persons—precautions which, if they have been unsuccessful, do not owe their want of success, so far as I am able to judge, to any lack of care on the part of the Secretary of State for War or any higher officials at the War Office. None of these officials have been examined or had any opportunity of giving their opinions or tendering their observations before the Committee which has just sat; and I regret that the hon. Gentleman should have cast aspersions against my right hon. friend and his subordinates at that time, without a tittle of evidence to support it.

MR. LOUGH: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware—to take one item—that forty-three cargoes of oats arrived after June 1st—112,000 tons—and that any of these cargoes might easily have been ordered elsewhere? They kept arriving for eight months.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is not in the least contradictory to the Answer I have just given. I would remind the hon. Gentleman that when a contract has been entered into and freight has already been paid, it may be an economical, and very often will be an economical, course to allow those stores to be taken to their original destination. That is a

matter which must vary in each particular case. Contracts which have been entered into cannot be cancelled without a large pecuniary sacrifice.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Does not the right hon Gentleman accept the view of the collective responsibility of Ministers for anything done by one Minister?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not gone into the question of responsibility at all.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The right hon. Gentleman, I think we understood as a result of the conversation yesterday, would to-day make a statement as to the conclusion he had come to with regard to the proper means of prosecuting the inquiry into these matters.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the view of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends is that there should be a further inquiry into this matter. That is very strongly the view of His Majesty's Government. It is quite manifest that the inquiry we have had is utterly insufficient to enable anybody to arrive at the truth in regard to this matter, and it must be supplemented by some more efficient machinery. The only question is what that machinery should be. As the House knows, I was inclined yesterday to think a Parliamentary Committee would be the most expeditious plan. Two circumstances, however, have somewhat modified that view. The first of these is that I gathered from such sources of information as are open to me that this method was not one acceptable to the House at large. The other is that it is not in accordance with precedent. The most relevant precedent, I think, is when a Commission was appointed to inquire into the charges of maladministration and corruption in connection with bent bayonets and broken swords of which the right hon. Gentleman knows. He was concerned in that matter—I do not, of course, mean personally.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It was referred to by the right hon. Gentleman yesterday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That was the transaction I referred to, and it is the most relevant precedent in every way, as far as I can judge. The course which was then taken, with the approval of the right hon. Gentleman, was to appoint a Commission. That was the course taken by the then Government with the approval of the then Opposition, and that, being the most on all fours with the present case, is the precedent we propose to follow. I shall therefore take the necessary steps to appoint a Commission to carry on these investigations which have hitherto been so imperfectly carried out.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think the right hon. Gentleman has rightly interpreted the general desire and feeling of the House. The desire is that this matter should be further examined into by some body capable of administering an oath and compelling the attendance of witnesses and compelling the production of documents. Yesterday we were led to believe that the right hon. Gentleman favoured a Committee of the House. I think he has been wisely advised—by his own intelligence, no doubt—in altering that view; because, although there is a good deal to be said on both sides, such a Commission as he proposes appears to me to be on the whole the best means of dealing with this question. But that is only a part of the question—an inquiry into the manner in which certain public officers have discharged their duties in South Africa. I have to say that we take a somewhat larger view of the matter, and at all events we separate that branch of the inquiry altogether from another which we consider at least of equal importance, and that is the conduct of His Majesty's Government with regard to these transactions. We think that that is a matter—the facts being admitted and known and requiring no further investigation—

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Which facts?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We know sufficient to enable us, as we

think, and as I think the country is of opinion, to judge of the conduct of His Majesty's Government; and, therefore, as this is a matter of immediate importance, I beg to say that we shall submit a Motion on the subject without any delay.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that he wants a discussion first and then an inquiry? If so, I can only say that a procedure more totally and absolutely inconsistent with elementary justice was never suggested—

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir. What we desire is—it will be difficult—to prevent, if we can, the right hon. Gentleman from sheltering himself behind the inquiry. There are two branches of the question—[Interruption on the MINISTERIAL side]—if the Irish Secretary will allow me to speak—

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): I never opened my mouth.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There are two branches of the question, the one affecting the conduct of the officers on the spot in South Africa, and the other affecting the manner in which the Government at home have dealt with the whole question from first to last. They are entirely separate from each other, and it is on the second alone that the Motion I have referred to will be made.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The distinction presented by the right hon. Gentleman seems to me absolutely absurd. Does he really suggest to this House, as the responsible Leader of the Opposition, that we should so frame the reference to the Commission as to prevent it from inquiring into the *laches*, or the supposed *laches*, of the Government and the Ministers and officials under it? [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] Very well, you mean to include that in the reference, and to debate it first; a course that is grossly unjust.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman will perhaps remember in the midst of his indignation

a little fact, which is that he promised the House a day for the discussion of this subject.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): Will the Commission be set up at the instance of and on the advice of this House, and will the names of the Commissioners be suggested to the House before the Commission is set up, particularly considering the fact that it is intended that the reference shall be wide enough to embrace the conduct of Ministers who themselves are going to appoint the Commissioners?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope the House will notice the procedure which has been adopted. I suggested machinery yesterday which the right hon. Gentleman says I was right in abandoning to-day. That machinery would have allowed the House to determine who the Committee should be who were to deal with this question. I have abandoned that in deference to opinions that were expressed, and I am now asked to depart from the ordinary procedure for appointing a Royal Commission, to violate precedent, because, forsooth, the hon. Gentleman thinks that the Government are going to be attacked. All I have to say to it is that we shall rigidly adhere to the ordinary practice in such cases, and shall not depart from it.

MR. CHURCHILL (Oldham): I do not gather whether the right hon. Gentleman intends to grant a day for a vote of censure which has been asked.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, who was interrupted by Ministerial cries of "Oh": The Chief Secretary must really control himself.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): Order, order! You are not suppressing a meeting in Ireland now.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have not spoken.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I presume it is a statutory Commission to which the right hon. Gentleman refers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Then what is it?

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I understood the Prime Minister to say that he did not promise a day for the discussion of this question. But is it not the fact that another day in Supply was promised to me in consideration of my not moving an Amendment when the Vote on which this matter would have arisen was before the House. I, in fact, began my speech then by saying I would not go into the matter of the contracts because another day had been promised.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I thought the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition was referring, not to a Supply day, but to a day allocated quite outside the ordinary procedure of the House. It is perfectly true that I did say that in consideration of this matter not being discussed on the Supply day in which it would have been relevant, I should take care that another Supply day would be given.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Does the right hon. Gentlemen intend to follow the precedent of what has been done in the case of the incriminated officers and to suspend the Minister for War?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Will the Commission have power to take evidence on oath?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

MR. WHITLEY: May I ask whether the officers who have been relieved of their duties have applied for or been given an opportunity of a Court-martial whereby they may be tried by their fellow officers and cleared or found guilty, as the case may be, of the charges made in the Butler Report?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No such application has been received. I do believe that a court-martial is the legitimate procedure in the case of an officer, but I also believe, and the House will agree with me, that if the House should

insist on another larger inquiry which is to embrace all the matters which would be brought before the Court-martial, nothing but confusion and probably nothing but disadvantage to the officers concerned would result from having the two inquiries concurrently. If there were to be no inquiry instituted by this House or by the Government I am quite of opinion that a Court-martial would be the legitimate and obvious tribunal for these officers to state their case before.

MR. WHITLEY: If the House is of opinion that a Court-martial would be the proper course, would not that clear the way for the Commission to deal with the separate question of the responsibility of the War Office?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER: I hope there will be no misunderstanding on this question. The Prime Minister said that one of the advantages of the form of inquiry he proposed would be the power to administer an oath. I should like to ask once again whether there is any power short of an Act of Parliament which would enable a Commission to administer an oath? We were told, I think, at the time of the Parnell Commission it was necessary to have an Act of Parliament in order to enable the Commission to administer the oath.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman is perfectly right. I was under the impression yesterday that a Royal Commission could not administer an oath; but I have looked into the precedents, and I find that in the case of this very Commission in 1886, the Commission had power, not derived from statute, but from the terms of its appointment, to administer an oath.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether he has found any precedent for a Royal Commission having power to compel the attendance of witnesses?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I do not know that they have that power.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): Will the right hon. Gentleman, before committing himself to this course, inquire

whether a Royal Commission without any statutory authority is a constitutional tribunal endowed with any of the powers referred to—namely, the power to administer an oath and the power to compel the production of documents and the attendance of witnesses?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I understand the matter, the precedents show conclusively that a Royal Commission has been appointed which has the power to administer an oath and that such a Commission has actually administered the oath. That was the case of the Commission of 1886, over which Sir James Fitzjames Stephen presided. He not only had the power given him in the terms of reference, but he exercised the power and the oath was administered. With regard to the production of documents the same power does not exist.

MR. BRYCE: The Commission will not have power to compel attendance of witnesses.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, I do not think they have that power.

*LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): What power has a Royal Commission to compel a witness to accept an oath if he declines? I mean could a witness be committed for contempt in consequence by the Commission or by the High Court?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have to remind the noble Lord that this is not a question of theory, but of practice; and as a matter of fact three or four Commissions within relatively recent times have actually been appointed and empowered to administer an oath, and have actually administered an oath. I think that should be sufficient.

MR. JOHN MORLEY (Montrose Burghs): Would the right hon. Gentleman recall the circumstances under which what is commonly known as the Parnell Commission was appointed? That was a statutory Commission.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes; but there was a very important question involved in the appointment of the Parnell Commis-

sion, which was the power of giving an indemnity to witnesses. That could not possibly be done except by statute, and that, I should imagine, is not either required or desired in this case.

SIR ROBERT REID: Does the Attorney-General say that there is any authority apart from a statute for His Majesty to appoint a Commission of inquiry into such things as he may think fit, or that he may be advised to inquire into, with the power of administering an oath, and with the consequence of a charge of perjury in the event of that oath being violated?

THE ATTORNEY - GENERAL (Sir ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): I think my hon. and learned friend will find, if he refers to precedents, that there are four since 1860, including that year, 1862, and, I think, 1867, and certainly 1886, where the power to administer an oath was contained in a clause of the Royal Commission itself, and that power has been acted upon.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will the Prime Minister agree to lay on the Table of the House all the documents in the possession of the War Office or any other Department tending to throw light on this subject?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: All the documents will naturally be at the command of the Commission itself.

MR. LABOUCHERE: But we want them here.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Let the House hear this. They have refused a Committee of this House. I think the inquiry should be conducted before one body, not before two bodies, and of course the information will be given to the Commission.

MR. WHITLEY: May I ask the Prime Minister whether he has taken any steps, in view of the grave statement of the Butler Committee that important documents bearing on this matter have either been lost or destroyed already, to ensure that all documents now in existence shall be preserved for whatever inquiry there is?

MR. ARNOLD FORSTER: I have already taken steps that all documents connected with the inquiry both at home and in South Africa shall be impounded.

NEW BILLS.

REVENUE BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue; and for other purposes connected with Finance," presented by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer; supported by Mr. Victor Cavendish; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 247.]

JUDICATURE AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT (IRELAND) BILL.

"To augment the Ireland Development Grant by means of the abolition of two Judgeships and the reduction of the salary of the Lord Chancellor and the transfer of certain accumulations, and to make provision with respect to the application of portion of that Grant," presented by Mr. Walter Long; supported by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 248.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON, upon the Motion of Mr. A. J. Balfour, took the Chair as Chairman of Ways and Means.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS I.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £22,000, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for constructing a new Harbour of Refuge at Peterhead."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Pro-

gress and ask leave to sit again"—(Mr. A. J. Balfour),—put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT (KING'S ANSWER TO ADDRESS, 7TH JUNE).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the annual sum of £4,000 net be granted to His Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the said annuity to commence and take effect upon the day upon which the right hon. William Court Gully, late Speaker of the House of Commons, ceased to hold the office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to be settled in the most beneficial manner upon, and to continue during the life of, him the said right hon. William Court Gully."—(Mr. A. J. Balfour.)

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) moved to reduce the sum of £4,000 to £1,000. He wished to make it perfectly clear that he was animated by no personal feeling. Had he been present when the tributes were paid to the late Speaker he could have agreed with every word then spoken and every sentiment given expression to. But £4,000 was too much for one individual, and any sum was too much to pay to an official of that House so long as they could not find any sum, however small, to vote as pensions to aged workmen, of whom there were thousands—to whom the remark made of the Speaker that he had earned his pension by the performance of his duty equally applied. The other day some 500 men marched from Leicester to London in search of work. Out of the number 164 were ex-Army men, for whom no pensions had been provided. If it was to be a question of granting pensions to public servants only as distinct from ordinary civil workmen surely an ex-soldier was entitled to rank equally with

an ex-Speaker. Ten years ago, when a similar Motion was made on the retirement of Mr. Speaker Peel, he said at the outset that it was a very disagreeable duty he had to perform. It was equally so that day, but it was a duty that had to be done and which would have to be done more frequently in the future than in the past. In order to mark his opinion that a pension of £4,000 was too much to be paid to an ex-official of that House, so long as working people outside got no pension at all, he begged

to move the substitution of £1,000 for £4,000.

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out “£4,000,” and insert “£1,000.”—(*Mr. Keir Hardie*)

Question put, “That ‘£4,000’ stand part of the Question.”

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 245; Noes, 17. (Division List No. 201.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manchester)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christchurch)
Banner, John S. Harwood
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Blake, Edward
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boulnois, Edmund
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Bull, William James
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt. Hn. JA (Glasgow)
Campbell, J. (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cawley, Frederick
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. JA (Worcester)
Chapman, Edward
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)

Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, Alfred (Carmarthen)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-shire)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Edwards, Frank
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fenwick, Charles
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manchester)
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inverness-Boroughs)
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Garfit, William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn)
Gordon, Maj. Evans (Trinity Mills)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby
Greene, Sir EW. (Bristol & Edmonds)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord G. (Midlothian)
Hamilton, Marquess of (Lancaster & Downe)
Harcourt, Lewis
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynemouth)
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Heaton, John Henniker
Helder, Augustus
Helm, Norval Watson

Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Higham, John Sharp
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hobhouse, Rt. Hn. H. (Somerset, E.)
Hogg, Lindsay
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howard, J. (Middlesex, Tottenham)
Hozier, Hn. James Henry C.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Kitson, Sir James
Knowles, Sir Lees
Labouchere, Henry
Lambton, Hn. Fredk. Wm.
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Lee, A. H. (Hants, Fareham)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lough, Thomas
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdonald, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
MacArthur, Chas. (Liverpool)
MacIver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W.)
MacKillop, James (Stirlingshire)
Majendie, James A. H.
Malcolm, Ian
Marks, Harry Hananel
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Mitchell, Wm. (Burnley)

Montagu, Hn. J.Scott(Hants.)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 Morley, Rt.Hn.John (Montrose
 Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mount, William Arthur
 Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Myers, William Henry
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Malley, William
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Paulton, James Mellor
 Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
 Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Purvis, Robert
 Randles, John S.
 Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
 Reid, Sir R.Threshie(Dumfries
 Renmant, James Farquharson
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine

Ritchie, Rt. Hn.Chas.Thomson
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Rose, Charles Day
 Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
 Runciman, Walter
 Russell, T. W.
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Sadler, Col. S. Alexander
 Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
 Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
 Seely, Maj.J.E.B. (Isle of Wight
 Sharpe, Wm. Edward T.
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soares, Ernest J.
 Spencer, Rt.HnC.R.(Northants
 Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lancs.
 Sullivan, Donal
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
 Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Toulmin, George

Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
 Turnour, Viscount
 Valentia, Viscount
 Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
 Walrond, Rt.Hn.Sir Wm. H.
 Walton, John Lawson (Leeds,S.
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warde, Colonel C. E.
 Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan
 Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney
 Welby, Lt-Col A.C.E. (Taunton
 Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
 Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
 White, Luke (York, E. R.)
 Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
 Wilson, H. J. (York, W. R.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
 Woodhouse, Sir J.T.(Huddersf'd
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart.
 Wrightson, Sir Thomas
 Wylie, Alexander
 Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
 Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Mr. Herbert Gladstone.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
 Abraham, William (Rhondda)
 Burke, E. Haviland
 Crooks, William
 Delany, William
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.

Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
 O'Brien, K. (Tipperary, Mid.)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, Jas. Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)

Parrott, William
 Richards, Thomas
 Shackleton, David James

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr.
 Keir Hardie and Mr. Nan-
 netti.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Order for Committee read.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (MR. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): I beg to move "that the House do go into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts." I find myself fortunate this afternoon not merely in the nature of the statement I have to make to the House, but in the time of year at which the opportunity is afforded me. This year is an exception to the custom which has usually obtained of deferring the debate to the close of the session, and I hope this is a precedent that will be followed on future occasions

by myself, should it be my good fortune to hold office, or by some hon. Gentleman opposite. Discussion at this earlier period is more likely to lead to useful criticism and efficient administration. The story I have to unfold shows that the revenue for 1904-5 was the largest ever gathered. The Estimates are known to the House. The figures for 1903-4 showed a surplus of £2,996,400 and last year showed a surplus of £3,485,500, the Estimates of August last having been exceeded. Although the whole of the surplus cannot be anticipated for future years, special causes having intervened as regards railway receipts and the opium duty to make the surplus an exceptional one, still the general state of progress and prosperity in the country is indicated by the figures. It is not merely the figures themselves that will most appeal to the House. If

the man who takes a comparatively scant or perfunctory interest in the finances and administration of India were asked what were the points upon which, during the last year, his mind had been chiefly fixed by his conversation with others and his reading in newspapers, they would be found to be not the points indicating the exceptional prosperity of the country, but the number of drawbacks from which India has suffered in the past year. There has been a great, and what I fear is a growing, visitation of the plague; scarcity has occurred in certain districts owing to the partial failure of the monsoons, and owing to frost of a very severe character in Northern India during February and March, causing reductions in land revenue; and in April there was the exceptional and wholly unexpected visitation of earthquake which involved some call on the finances of the country.

Perhaps in passing I may be allowed to say a few words on the visitation of the plague. I know there are Members of this House who have some degree of anxiety as to the amount of care and trouble taken by the Government of India with regard to this matter. I grant at once that if it were possible to apply in India all the remedies which science suggests and good government can afford we might largely decrease the present exceptional and unfortunate mortality. If we had been able to apply to the whole general public of India all those measures which we are able to take with regard to the special bodies of the Indian population who are under our control, for instance, the Indian Army and the prisoners confined in the gaols—if we had been able on all occasions to secure that infected clothing should be at once burnt, that infected buildings should be properly dealt with, that persons travelling from infected stations should be at once segregated, and that all those remedies which have been effectual in much smaller areas should be applied, I do not doubt that this great mortality might have been to a large extent arrested. Any man in this House who is acquainted with the habits and feelings of the people of India knows that such measures as these could not be

universally adopted without an excessive stoppage of all the ordinary operations of trade and travelling, and of the usual avocations of individuals in the State, and that their adoption would excite the utmost suspicion and possibly even active resistance if they were applied without the consent and in opposition to the wishes of the people. It is a lamentable fact that we have not yet been able to educate our Indian fellow-subjects to an appreciation of the dangers which they incur by concealment, and also by the neglect of precautions with regard to the outbreak of this disease.

I think the statistics with regard to the native troops may be said to be wonderfully good. We have to record the loss of more than a million of human beings throughout India from the ravages of plague. But among over 140,000 native troops we have only to report 115 deaths. That is an infinitesimal fraction. That shows, I think, that a special degree of credit is due to the energy and forethought of those who preside over the sanitary arrangements of the native troops. The House will be better able to appreciate these figures when they read in the Sanitary Commissioner's Report that out of a total of 184 military stations, fifty-seven were situated in or near towns or districts in which plague occurred among the general population, and in these fifty-seven stations only twenty-four had cases among the Sepoys. Having regard to the way in which the Sepoys mix with the general population, that fact reflects great credit on the medical authorities. In the gaols, of course, our path is much easier. The cases discovered in the gaols numbered only thirty-four, of which twenty-three proved fatal, although of the 245 gaols 159 were situated in infected districts. I can assure the House that there has been no indifference on the part of the Government of India or of the local Governments in regard to this important matter, and there has been no neglect. Every reasonable precaution has been pressed upon the people, and we have sent out in the last few months a special Commission to endeavour by systematic scientific research to establish, if they can, further means for the prevention of this

disease. I fear it must be confessed that this is one of the cases in which, with the wonderful development of surgery in medical science, there are still departments of medicine in which there are countries, not altogether unexplored, but still to be conquered. I believe we have still much to learn in regard to the sources of this disease. We shall avail ourselves to the utmost of what we may learn from this Commission, who will have at their disposal the whole of the sanitary corps and appliances of the country.

Then, from the anticipated receipts of last year for land revenue we had to relinquish £618,000 to meet the failure of the monsoon in Gujerat and certain districts of Madras, and from the present year we have to deduct on account of the frost in Northern India, in March, 42½ lakhs of rupees already remitted, and 7½ lakhs suspended, pending the decision as to how far the harvest has been affected. These remissions have been, and will be, promptly given. With regard to the earthquake fortunately the damage done, although the extent of it was most alarming, has not been such as to cast an immense charge on the revenues of India. But there have been very heavy losses to individuals; and I have been in communication with the Government of India and have impressed upon them the necessity of endeavouring, in a matter in which no human control and no prevention is possible, to give liberally to those who have chiefly suffered by the loss of their houses or by personal injury. With regard to the Gurkha regiments, who especially suffered, the Commander-in-Chief has recommended, and the Government of India support, the grant of free passages to England to officers' families or widows who have been obliged to proceed home, a grant of 60,000 rupees to assist in rebuilding the mess houses and private houses, a grant to the band fund, for mess furniture, to the regimental institutions, and other offices, and injury pensions or gratuities to injured officers on the ordinary scale. We propose to exercise our powers under the Royal Warrant in as liberal a manner as possible in order to relieve these

officers and men as far as we can of the misfortune they have encountered.

Having mentioned these drawbacks, I am brought back to the fact that the revenue collected last year was, none the less, the largest ever gathered in India. Trade showed the largest returns, and the expenditure by the poorer classes was on the most satisfactory scale. We are forced to ask ourselves—is this prosperity temporary? Is it simply a flash in the pan? Are we asking this House to deal with an assured surplus, or are we distributing funds which form a fortuitous windfall? I think the best answers to these questions are to be found in the accounts. I am not one of those who are inclined to place too highly the stability of Indian finance. I remember always that we are dealing in the mass with a very poor population, and that the sources of Indian financial prosperity have fluctuated in the past. But I venture to ask the House of Commons to believe that the sources of prosperity have been placed, and are being placed, on a more stable basis, the foundation of which we now believe is, thanks to good government for many years past, one from which we may hope for assured returns. We cannot bring all India to such a condition that she may be altogether exempt from these great calamities which overtake her from time to time. By the expenditure of money we may set up irrigation colonies in one part of India, but natural difficulties prevent our establishing similar colonies in another part, say in the Deccan or Bombay. But what we can do is to bring the prosperity of one part of India to the needs of the other.

Now, Sir, the statistics of trade during this last year are remarkable. In 1902-3 the total trade of India was £143,476,000. In 1903-4 it advanced to £164,000,000. In 1904-5 it advanced again to £174,748,000. That is a steady advance following years of advance. I believe it is largely to be accounted for by the improved condition of agriculture, by the improved arrangements for manufacture, and, above all, by the great extension of railways. Of the £143,000,000 of trade in 1902-3, £62,000,000 was trade directly with Great Britain. Of the trade of last year

(£174,748,000), £77,000,000 was directly to and from Great Britain. That is not an inconsiderable item in the trade of Great Britain, and it is a great increase in two years. And if we compare those figures, as some people from different points of view are now occupied in comparing the trade of the Colonies with the trade of India, I could point out that the exports from the United Kingdom to India in 1902, which were £33,500,000, were equal to the exports to Canada, the British Colonies in North America, and to Australia, and last year the exports to India, which had grown to £40,000,000, equalled the whole of the exports from this country to Australia, to Canada, and to Cape Colony combined. I trust I shall carry every Member of this House with me when I say that the trade of India with the United Kingdom tends continually to increase, and that the stake of the United Kingdom in the trade of India and the stake of India in the trade of the United Kingdom are such that we are entitled to claim for India the first place after the United Kingdom in all the discussions that may take place as regards trade within the Empire.

What are the several sources of India's prosperity? I alluded a few moments ago to the question of railways. In 1905 we had 27,749 miles of railway, of which 623 miles were opened in 1904-5. We had 3,139 miles under construction. Our passengers, who in 1902 numbered 196,000,000, rose in 1903 to 210,000,000 and in 1904 to 229,000,000--an enormous and progressive increase. The tonnage of merchandise, which was 45,500,000 in 1902, rose to 47,500,000 in 1903, and to nearly 54,500,000 in 1904. These figures alone show what has been often put before this House by my predecessor, that there is no expenditure of money which so much adds to the wealth of the Government, while also adding to the material prosperity of the people, as this expenditure on railways in India at the present time. There is another evidence of the continuous prosperity of the year that I ought to mention. It is the export of precious metals, the value of which in 1902 exceeded £10,500,000, in 1903 £15,500,000, and in 1904

by just under £15,500,000. This shows a demand among private individuals, notably among the poorer classes, for the precious metals. The Savings Banks showed a balance of £7,500,000 in 1900, of £9,000,000 in 1903, and in 1905 of £10,700,000. All this evidence tends in the same direction and shows that the Government of India are within their rights in treating the present prosperity as the result of ascertainable causes, and not due merely to fortuitous windfalls.

The two questions which I would ask the House to consider to-day are (1) whether we are right in the application of the surplus which we have realised, and (2) whether the measures which we are taking outside that surplus for the maintenance and enhancement of the prosperity of India are sufficient and prudent. The surplus with which we have to deal has enabled us to make a further reduction of taxation. It is not a mere statement of profit and loss, but we hope we are making what may be a permanent reduction, or at all events what is a permanent insurance, in this respect. We have not reached our limits in reducing taxation, and the more we can reduce the salt tax the more we know that if, by misfortune or a series of bad years, it becomes necessary at any time to increase taxation, we have something on which, without unduly pressing on those concerned, we may lay our hands for an increased revenue. The salt tax was 2 rupees per maund from 1882 to 1888 and 2½ rupees from 1888 to 1893. It was reduced by my noble friend to 2 rupees in 1903, and we have reduced it this year to 1½ rupees. A great many questions have been raised as to whether this reduction of a tax which is a tax on a necessary of life really reaches the poorer classes. That is a difficult thing to say, but perhaps the best proof is that the consumption of salt has increased. Whether that increased consumption is entirely due to those who had not this necessary of life before being now able to obtain it I cannot say, but I suppose the reduction of the tax means, to a certain extent, that there is a little more freedom in the use of the article. But we have made the experiment; the tax

has been reduced 40 per cent. in two years, and I hope we shall have the support of the House in doing so.

The Government of India also found it possible this year to concede the abolition of the famine cesses which have been levied in the United Provinces, the Punjab, and the Central Provinces since 1878, amounting to £151,000 a year. They have given grants for primary education (which will meet the views of those Members who last year pressed, and pressed very fairly, upon the notice of the House the necessity for increased primary education throughout India), amounting to £350,000, for the increasing of staffs, and the building and setting up of new schools. I do not for a moment contend that this is more than an instalment of the work which is required to be done, but it is a considerable step in advance. We propose to spend on agricultural development, on demonstration farms, and on other agricultural scientific purposes £214,000. The Government of India have given the Local Governments and district local boards for civil works, roads, sanitation, and other services which could not possibly be undertaken out of local revenue, £758,000. There is an increased charge for the police of £405,000. Those Members who have read the Report of the Police Commission will consider that we were well warranted in having reconsidered the whole position of the police. There have been differences of opinion as to whether the Police Commission have given sufficient weight to diversity of rates of pay and diversity of conditions in different provinces; but, after the most careful review, we cannot doubt that, if we are to have what we are determined to have, an efficient and uncorrupt police, we are bound to give a certain rise in pay and improved inspection, and we believe the action now proposed will not only be to the advantage of the Government, but will come home to the individual in every district. We shall have to ask for a further addition next year, but I am sure the House will support the Government of India in the courageous manner in which they have dealt with this question.

These different items amount in all to £3,120,000. I have dwelt upon them

not only because they are necessary to the statement I am putting before the House, but because I desire to make it perfectly clear that these charges, which are charges either for remission of taxation or for civil improvements, have come before us *pari passu*, and with equal weight, with another charge which we find it necessary to impose for the further development of our military forces in India. It is my duty this afternoon to ask the House of Commons to increase the charge for military services by something like £2,440,000. Between 1900-01, when the net charge for military services was a little over £15,000,000, and 1905-6, when it has reached a little over £20,500,000, we have made undoubtedly very considerable extra demands on the finances of India. I believe those finances can bear them. But, apart from that, those of us who listened to the Prime Minister's speech the other day will be aware that the division of responsibility between India and this country is now a recognised division proceeding on lines that, at all events, we can understand. The main reason for which the military forces of this country are now organised is the defence of India. It has been laid down by His Majesty's Government that, while India will continue to reserve the 75,000 British troops and the 140,000 native troops, or thereabouts, which she holds at disposal at the present time in a case of emergency, it is her duty to provide those troops with transport, with all supplies, and with all the material of war necessary to keep them in the field for a year without fresh supplies from home. I believe that to be an absolutely sound provision, and one for which we have a right to ask the continued and constant support of Parliament. On the other hand, the Prime Minister recognised the necessity and responsibility of this country, in case of an attack coming upon us from the only land frontier from which we can suppose a foreign attack, to provide the necessary troops, rather over 120,000 men, to supplement the Indian Army according as the necessities require. It may be said that for India to spend £20,500,000 on army preparations out of a revenue of £82,000,000 is a large strain, while Great Britain is spending only £29,800,000 out of a revenue of £144,000,000. But it must

be remembered that the Indian charge contains the whole charge, while the British charge is entirely apart from the Navy expenditure of £33,400,000, of which India contributes only an infinitesimal fraction, and from the charges for military and naval works, which bring up the whole expenditure of Great Britain to £71,000,000 out of a revenue of £144,000,000. Roughly speaking, we may say that, although an absolute comparison would be an impossibility, India is spending one-fourth, while Great Britain is spending one-half, of her revenue on military preparations. I am prepared to maintain the importance of India's carrying out to the full her share of the bargain which has been laid down, on condition that Great Britain is ready to adhere to her share of it.

The sum we ask for this year is increased by £2,400,000 for Lord Kitchener's reorganisation scheme, and makes up the whole total of £20,500,000. That reorganisation will give us the following advantages—the formation of nine divisions in peace and war, in place of the four divisions previously existing, and an increase of the field army from 80,000 to 140,000 men; it makes provision for mobilisation, equipment, transport, and stores; it provides, out of the £10,000,000, which is the total to which we have provisionally agreed, for the complete re-equipment of the Indian Army with field artillery. I am glad to say that the orders we gave in November, 1903, for the field artillery, which were the first orders accepted, are now beginning to bear fruit. The scheme also provides for the re-grouping of the troops so as to bring them nearer to the North-West Frontier. Further, it provides—and I ask for the special attention of the House to this particular—for the maintenance in India of manufacturing establishments which will make India self-supporting in all the necessities of war. We opened this year a gun-carriage factory at Jubbulpore; also next year we hope to open a gun factory at Cossipore; a rifle factory at Ishapore, and at Cawnpore a manufactory for horse-shoes as well as harness and saddlery, which are necessary, and which we believe we can provide not merely with equal efficiency, but at a less cost than by exportation from this

country. It does not need any speech from me to make it clear that it is absolutely necessary in the early stages of a war for India to be self-supporting. This expenditure is large, but the need is pressing; and although for some years we shall be making a larger demand—still not, I hope, in excess of that of this year—than that which has hitherto been made for military purposes, I hope it will be remembered that we do so at a time when the general revenue of India is higher than it has ever been, and when the salt tax is lower than it has ever been since the Mutiny.

I should like for one moment to pay a tribute to the great work set on foot by Lord Kitchener since he went to India two and a half years ago. I have had a good many Questions to answer as to certain difficulties which have arisen in the Army administration of India during the past and the present years, but I have not been in a position up till now to make a statement or lay Papers on this subject. The despatch which we received from the Government of India in the middle of April met with most careful attention from His Majesty's Government, and our reply only reached India at the beginning of this week. Had it been possible I should have desired to lay this despatch on the Table before this debate, but I hope that it will be distributed before the close of this week. In these circumstances, however, the House will wish me to give a brief summary of the points which are referred to in detail in the despatch. Let me begin by saying that no difficulties that have arisen have arisen in consequence of any obstruction to Lord Kitchener's schemes for the reorganisation of the Army by the Military Department, between whom and the Commander-in-Chief's Department there has been some friction. The officers who, under Major-General Sir E. Elles, administer the Military Department have heartily and patriotically seconded Lord Kitchener's schemes in their main principles. But, having had in view the general situation in India, His Majesty's Government have not been able to conceal from themselves that the position of the Commander-in-Chief has become an anomalous one, and that he does his

work under anomalous conditions. The Government of India—the Governor-General in Council—must necessarily be supreme over the Commander-in-Chief as over every person and every department of the Government. But that supremacy in the past, and very recently, has been carried out by means of placing in charge of the Military Department an officer with inferior rank to the Commander-in-Chief, an officer who, though of high standing, is yet necessarily a man with an inferior military position. Every proposal made by the Commander-in-Chief, whether it concerns a technical military point, on which he ought to be the chief, and, as we think, the only adviser of the Government, or whether it concerns a financial or political question, has equally to come under the review of his subordinate in Army matters, the Military Member of the Council. We hold that it is absolutely necessary for the Commander-in-Chief and his Department to be under the check of the supreme Government in all matters political and financial; but in regard to technical military questions—whether an army corps shall have twenty-five batteries or twenty, whether a brigade shall consist of six regiments or four—in regard to these questions the advice tendered to the Government of India should be a matter for the Commander-in-Chief alone and not for his military subordinate in charge of the Military Department. But up till now every such proposal made by the Commander-in-Chief has been reviewed by the Department of the Military Member, who first submits the question to the final Court of Appeal in India, the Governor-General in Council, then debates it in Council on a par with his colleague the Commander-in-Chief, and ultimately conveys to his colleague the decision of the Government of which they are both members. That seems to be an anomalous position of affairs, and it is rendered more so by the fact that there is an official, well known to some hon. Members, the Secretary to the Governor of India, in the Military Department, who is also a general officer and also subordinate to the Commander-in-Chief, but who is available for consultation by the Viceroy, and, apart from the Commander-in-

Chief, can tender his advice on technical subjects. So there are two subordinate officers between the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, both conversant with technical subjects and both advising upon them. I think the House will see that that system could only be worked by the aid of very great tact and forbearance on the part of all concerned.

Lord Kitchener's solution of the difficulty was that he should take over all the work of the Military Department, order all the stores, make all the contracts, control the manufacturing departments, and carry out both the services which up to the present have taxed the whole time of men like General Brackenbury and Sir E. Elles. The Government of India, on the other hand, held that no man, however able, could take upon himself such a charge. They also held that the tendency of such a change would be to set up a military autocracy in the person of the Commander-in-Chief, which would militate against the power of the Government of India to exercise the control which they should exercise in all matters. His Majesty's Government have come to this decision. They cannot doubt that the present system has led to friction and delay, would not tend to the effective mobilisation of the Army, and does not sufficiently provide against dual control and overlapping of functions in Army matters. They think it necessary to free the Commander-in-Chief from delays which have been vexatious in regard to the preparation of some of his military measures; and they think also that his mind should be set free for the consideration of questions of military intelligence and mobilisation, without having to undertake the daily routine of the ordering of stores, controlling the manufacturing departments, and such work, which, even though somewhat military in its character, can hardly call for high military qualities. They propose to make a clear division of duties and to establish two departments in place of the present organisation, an Army Department under the Commander-in-Chief and a Military Supply Department presided over by the Military Member of the Council, which will not be regarded as a military department in

the sense in which the present department is so regarded. The Commander-in-Chief will be directly responsible to the Governor-General in Council for the command, the staff, the discipline, training, and distribution of the Army, the Intelligence Department, mobilisation, schemes of offence and defence, peace manœuvres, preparations (excluding the supply of material) for war, and the conduct of war. The functions of the Military Supply Department will be limited to the responsibility for the control of Army contracts, purchase of stores, ordnance, and remounts, the management of military works, the clothing and manufacturing departments, the Indian Medical Service, and the Indian Marine. The recent development of the manufacturing departments, to which I alluded a few moments ago, the Viceroy informs us, will ultimately lead to the employment of from 15,000 to 20,000 artisans, and their control will give sufficient scope for the ability and the energy of the officer in charge. Such a rearrangement will leave the whole of the combatant service under the Commander-in-Chief. It is extremely desirable that the Commander-in-Chief's Department should be specially equipped to enable it to give more time to questions dealing with mobilisation, to which too small an amount of the energy of our Army has been devoted to in the past; and we propose, therefore, to give to Lord Kitchener, in view of his increased duties, a Chief of the Staff, who will undertake the responsibility for those further duties.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether the Supply Department will be presided over by a civilian or a military officer?

*MR. BRODRICK: That is a question which on each occasion of the appointment will be settled by those responsible. There is nothing in the department which prevents it from being presided over by a civilian; but it is a department in which military knowledge, of course, will be a considerable advantage, and though it may not necessarily be presided over by an officer whose talents are specially in the direction of military

service in the field, it should be presided over by an officer of high standing and long experience. But we attach special importance to this point, whoever holds the appointment, that if the Commander-in-Chief is a British officer and not an Indian officer, the officer in charge of the Military Supply Department must be an Indian officer or a Civil servant of considerable Indian experience. I hope my hon. friend would admit the desirability of that. Out of the three officers immediately under the Commander-in-Chief, we provide, when the Commander-in-Chief has no Indian experience, that two must necessarily be chosen from the Indian Army. These decisions have been communicated to the Government of India by His Majesty's Government, and will be brought into operation before October 1st next. I trust they will meet with acceptance by those who in the past have doubted whether the present system was adapted to the needs of India.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): Will legislation be necessary to make the change?

*MR. BRODRICK: No legislation will be necessary.

I hope I may complete my review of the details of expenditure which we propose out of the surplus in hand with a reference to the provisions by which we propose, as far as we can, to make more permanent in India the present prosperity. The state of agriculture in India, if not primitive, is capable of an immense amount of development. Those who know that until recently there was no Agricultural Department in India will be glad to hear that the staff in three years has been increased from six to twenty; and that in the Civil Veterinary Department we contemplate the addition, as trained men become available, of about 600 native veterinary assistants in charge of local cattle dispensaries, and of about sixty veterinary inspectors to supervise them.

With regard to establishing demonstration farms in various districts, although it may be some time before we can make them effective in all

districts, we hope that their work is already appreciated. We have a great advance to show in cotton. This year, in addition to experiments in progress under Government management, we have expended £3,000 on a special experiment undertaken in conjunction with the British Cotton Growing Association, the Association finding an equal sum towards the cost. We hope to improve the indigenous types by proceeding on lines directed by modern science; but it is to be remembered that cultivators do not find for the best types of cotton the best market in India. The acreage under cotton last year was 19,000,000, an increase of 1,000,000 acres over the acreage of the previous year. Although we may not be able to compete with some of the Colonies in the supply of cotton for this country, we may perform an important function and the Government of India are doing their best to that end. In regard to other matters of development, I must refer to the extraordinary development of tea plantations in India. In the period of 1870 to 1875, India exported an average of 17,000,000lb. of tea per annum. In the period 1880 to 1885 the average was 55,000,000lb.; in the period 1890 to 1895 the average was 119,000,000lb.; and in the period 1900 to 1905 the average was 183,000,000lb. That immense development has enabled India, with Ceylon, to capture the whole of the British Market; and in little more than twenty years to reduce the use of China tea from 102,000,000lb. to 13,000,000lb. There is surely no more striking example in the whole history of commercial activity of what may be done by energy and enterprise.

The Government of India have also taken up and put on a solid basis the irrigation schemes of the future. The work of a Commission, admirably done, has provided for the future and has laid down what number of productive works and what number of protective works must be undertaken in India. They propose that £30,000,000 shall be spent in twenty years on these works, divided as follows:—£10,000,000 on productive works, £14,000,000 on protective works, and £6,000,000 on intermediate works. I make no apology for the fact that the amount to be spent on

protective works is larger. The profit on productive works is 8 per cent.; and, having regard to their advantage to the public, it is right that we should in those parts of India that are less favourably situated carry out operations which save so much suffering.

With regard to the railway policy of India, what has been said by many others in this place, and what has been felt by many who speak with far greater authority and experience of the development of our railway policy in India, is that the time has come for us to take a definite step forward. We have this year formed a Railway Board, which has had much greater powers delegated to it by the Government. The board consists of experts—Mr. Upcott, long connected with the Railway Department in India; Mr. Wood, late of the Hull and Barnsley Railway; and Mr. Wynne, who has been connected with the Indian Public Works Department and with the Bengal-Nagpur Railway. India is, with the exception perhaps of China, the only country unprovided with an adequate system of railways, while having none of the difficulties of a new country—the need to wait for population and to create trade. It is not necessary to provide for a long period in which dividends must be paid out of capital while waiting for the ultimate return. You are stopped only by this one fact: that you cannot borrow sufficiently in the London market, or that it may not be wise to pledge to an outside creditor too large a proportion of the revenues of India. The 27,000 miles of railway that we have now in operation in India represent a capital expenditure of £235,000,000, on the whole of which interest is paid at 4·8 per cent. out of actual net revenue when all working expenses have been met. I can imagine that railway shareholders in England will envy such a condition of things. I believe that there is no better security in the world. I was struck by the remarks of Sir Edward Law, who in an admirable address recently was able to show not merely that these railways are paying their way, and that the whole debt guaranteed by the Government of India actually yields a surplus on its present returns, but that the whole assets of the Government of

India more than equal their liabilities; that the debt of India is more than covered by its assets in public works; and that the interest is more than provided by the returns of those public works from year to year. That has occurred for the first time in the last two years. No country in the world can boast of a similar position, and it is my hope that this great development may inspire us to continue this work at a much greater rate than in the past. I believe that the condition of Indian finance has only to be appreciated to make it far easier to borrow the necessary money. I should like to double the present rate of railway construction. I believe that by doing so we shall not only add grist to the mill of the Government, but confer incalculable advantage on the individual.

In carrying out this change we have endeavoured to take a further step forward this year not only in the establishment of the Railway Board and the Agricultural Department, but also in the establishment of a special Department of Commerce and Industry. The Indian Government, like the Government of all new countries, began by having to employ all-round men. In past ages in the Western hemisphere every man had to practise more than one trade. The soldier was also a sailor, the clergy were also lawyers, the barber was a surgeon, and the trader retailed wares of every description. It is not realised how much responsibility falls on one single man in India even in the present day. Sir William Hunter has described what the district officer has to do. He has to collect the revenue from land and other sources; he is a criminal Judge; he performs locally the whole work done in this country by the Home Department. He looks after the police, the gaols, education, the municipalities, the roads, sanitation, the dispensaries, and local taxation. To perform all these functions he has to be a lawyer, an accountant, a financier, a ready writer, and he must have no mean knowledge of agriculture, political economy, and engineering. No one will deny that there is room for specialisation here now that the Government has so far advanced. When we set up a new department it is not in order to find fresh employment, but to relieve the overworked men where

specialised work is required. India, as I have shown, has made great progress in the past. We stand on the threshold of many developments, and we have been enabled to use the powers of government entrusted to us as a nation so as to avoid great calamities. The time has come when we should endeavour to bring that prosperity nearer home to each individual. We have a secure Government, an uncorrupt Administration. We can bring the advantages of the capital of the West to co-operate with the cheap labour of the East; and I hope that we shall be able to show in the next few years, by building on that foundation, that we are doing something even more substantial than in the past for the welfare, not of one, but of many, among the varied communities in India that are committed to our charge.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on East India Revenue Accounts)."

*SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said he desired to make a few remarks on general questions before the House proceeded to discuss the various Amendments. Many questions of interest were involved in the statement which had just been delivered by the right hon. Gentleman; and it was in the interest of the House and of India that there should be a general debate. He wished to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the facts of his statement. They were of a satisfactory character; and he did not think that the right hon. Gentleman in any way coloured his statement. It was fair and just, and satisfactory to the House, and would be also satisfactory to the country. He did not mean that he agreed with all the right hon. Gentleman had said; and he should claim the right to discuss some questions of general administration and also some of the right hon. Gentleman's specific statements. As regarded the financial position, which showed a large surplus for the last three years, and a Budget which contemplated a moderate but considerable surplus, it was very encouraging. The accounts also were improved to a great extent, but he

suggested that the items should be in pounds sterling. In the statement which had been presented, the figures were in pounds sterling up to page 7; but after that in rupees. He would suggest that pounds sterling should be maintained throughout the accounts; and that if it were necessary to include rupees they should be put in tens of rupees. He would further urge that the figures in the statement presented to Parliament should be the actual figures, not the gross figures, in order that the House might know what was the net burden of the taxation of India, and what was the net expenditure. He gathered that the net revenue last year was £49,688,600, and that the expenditure for the present year was £47,900,000. But the gross expenditure was £88,000,000 or £90,000,000, which included the cost of the railways and other items.

In dealing with the surplus the right hon. Gentleman proposed remissions of taxation, involving a sacrifice of revenue and improvements in administration. The House had only one opinion regarding the reduction of the salt tax; but he thought it might have been reduced a year previously. He did not consider, however, that the reduction had yet reached its proper limit. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the consumption of mustard; but that would not apply to India. Mustard was not a necessary of life, salt was. He thought it was clear that the reduction last year had reached a lower class. What better test could there be than that of consumption? Consumption was larger when the taxation was lower. As regarded police, they could not expect any very stringent reform without additional expenditure.

With reference to railways, the right hon. Gentleman referred to the enormously increased revenue from railways, and the increase in the number of passengers and in the tonnage of goods carried. His hon. friend, one of the Members for the West Riding of Yorkshire, twelve years ago delivered a speech in the House which received attention at the time, and which influenced policy. His hon. friend then called attention to the desirability of increasing railways in India, in the interests not only of India

but of this country; and he urged the Government to adopt his policy and secure the satisfactory results which would follow. The policy adopted had been slow, cautious, and conservative; and he had no doubt it was still cautious and conservative. But now they had turned the corner. The railway net revenue during the last six years had increased from £600,000 to between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000; and he agreed with the Secretary of State that the time had arrived to embark on a larger expenditure for railway construction purposes. This was a matter which had better been done boldly, and not in a parsimonious and penny-wise fashion, always, of course, on the assumption that the railways were placed where they would be commercially successful.

He should like to refer to another matter; he referred to currency. The demand for rupees for trade purposes had enormously increased; and the system appeared to be working very satisfactorily. The Currency Committee recommended that no profit should be made on the coinage of silver. The noble Lord the Member for Ealing at once adopted the recommendation that no increase to the revenue of India in this respect should be permitted. It was put into a separate fund at compound interest in order to provide a permanent gold reserve. Now the whole of that reserve fund at the end of this year would be £8,478,000. That sum was invested in this country in Government securities. It was an available reserve in case of a crisis. So far from India being depleted by the course adopted, therefore, there was a gold reserve to the amount of £8,000,000, which was a most satisfactory result of the course adopted.

He did not know if any hon. Member had read the debate which took place in the Legislative Council of the Viceroy on their Budget day. It formed a part of the Blue-book which deserved the careful attention of Members of the House interested in India. In the Viceroy's Council there were the leaders of Indian administration and a large native representation, and in the course of the debate which took place

there were two or three remarks which he thought bore somewhat on the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. The first that he had marked for notice was a remark made by a Minister with reference to the plague. The right hon. Gentleman had discussed that matter at some length, and no doubt the Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for Ilkeston would deal with that. But there was a distinguished member of the Council who made a few remarks which the House would be pleased to hear read. That gentleman said—

“The excellence of a Budget does not in my humble opinion consist in showing large surpluses, but in the manner in which they are utilised, and I am glad to say the Budget before us possesses that characteristic. My Lord, six successive years of large surpluses is an event of unique occurrence in the financial history of British India, this being the sixth year in your Lordship's rule in which a Budget showing a large surplus has again been laid before this Council. This is the more remarkable as at the commencement of your Excellency's administration the country was passing through a famine characterised as the greatest famine of the century. Under your Excellency's *regime* not only have the finances of India been brought to a satisfactory condition without the imposition of any fresh taxes, but a policy of giving financial relief to the people by the remission of taxation has been inaugurated—a state of things which has been quite unknown to Indian taxpayers during the two decades preceding the year 1902-3.”

After alluding to details that member continued—

“The further reduction of duty on such a necessary of life as salt will give a much needed relief to a class of people who most urgently required it.”

Then the largest landowner in Bengal, a member of the aristocracy of India, said—

“The proposals of the Government had met with universal approbation.”

On the other side, the Opposition side as it might be called, there was an extremely interesting speech by Mr. Gokhale. That gentleman said the statement of the Finance Minister was—

“Remarkable alike for its grasp of principle and its mastery of detail, and for lucidity of exposition it will rank with the best statements that have ever been presented to this Council.”

He then said—

“The salt duty was reduced to 8 annas last year and the measure of relief was received with deep gratification throughout the country.

Sir Henry Fowler.

The reduction might, however, be carried still further without any inconvenience. The salt-duty question in India is essentially a poor man's question, for it is the poorer many and not the richer few who eat more salt when it is cheap and less when it is dear. The soundest policy in the matter, even financially, would therefore seem to be to raise an expanding revenue on an expanding consumption under a diminishing scale of duties.”

There was considerable objection to the expenditure on military works. The right hon. Gentleman had announced as the policy of this country that the main object of the Army in India and in this country was the protection of the North-West Frontier of India. Many policies as to the Army had been laid down and the House one day would perhaps know what the true policy of the War Office was, but the policy laid down to-day was clear enough. He took exception to the doctrine it contained, because there was no satisfactory proof that such a policy was necessary. We were bound to protect India, and we had protected her, but he believed that India was less liable to an aggressive attack now than she had ever been during the last fifty years. This policy of increased Indian Army expenditure had only been brought before the House sectionally, but it was a policy which ought to receive the most careful consideration of the country as a whole. The question was whether we were called upon to impose on the taxpayers of Great Britain and Ireland the heavy additional taxation which was now foreshadowed for military expenditure, and which had now reached a point it had never attained before. He did not wish to leave India defenceless, nor did he grudge expense for the defence of India. For in his opinion the military expenditure in India had been conducted much more carefully than the military expenditure in this country, and he much preferred the methods and administration of the War Office of India to those of the British War Office.

With regard to the question of there being two Military Members in the Viceroy's Cabinet he wondered what would be said if in this country in addition to the Secretary of State for War there was another Military Member of the Cabinet. Friction was always bound to arise when there were two strong men in the Indian Cabinet representing

the Army. The right hon. Gentleman's proposal was that these two members of the Council were to remain in the Cabinet, connected with the administration of military affairs but with distinct and separate functions. One, he hoped, was to be a civilian who would have the control of the expenditure, the other the Commander-in-Chief. The theory in this country was that the Army was to be under the financial control of a civilian and not of a military officer. It was very desirable that the Indian military expenditure, as in this country, should be under civilian control. Expenditure meant the imposition of taxation, the imposition of taxation involved a burden upon the people, and also the policy of the Government, and the view he was endeavouring to put was that there was nothing in India essentially different in principle as compared with England, where civilian control was exercised over expenditure, and the military authorities were presumably left to settle military matters. The respective positions of the Military Members in Council the Government had now condemned, and he presumed the despatches to be published would show the final view of the Government of India and Lord Kitchener upon the decision of the Government.

MR. BRODRICK said there would be nothing more recent than the Government's own despatch of May 31st.

*SIR HENRY FOWLER took it for granted that the right hon. Gentleman would let the House know as soon as possible what the view of the Indian Government was. He would have liked them to say at once and definitely that the financial head of the Supply Department should be a civilian.

With reference to military works, he did not like to say he differed from the Indian Finance Minister or the Viceroy, but he did differ from their complete repudiation of borrowing for military works of a permanent character. The Secretary of State could not object to such borrowing, as he himself was the founder of the fund raised in this country

for the erection of barracks. For recurring expenditure money ought not to be borrowed, but for permanent work; several members of the Council held that the expenditure would put an unnecessary burden upon the taxpayers, and that it might be spread over a limited number of years. The financial policy with reference to these new military works had not been completely explained, but he assumed the object would be to defray as much as possible out of revenue. The Indian Government would wish to do that, without precluding the possibility of executing works which could not be paid for out of revenue. He could conceive works extending over a long period of years, the expenditure upon which it might be desirable to arrange upon a distinct basis, so that only £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 should be taken annually out of revenue. But perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would make the point clear later in the debate.

The Secretary of State had referred to the wonderful progress of India during the last year or two, and to the trade existing between this country and India. On this point he would quote briefly from two speeches in the Indian Council. Mr. Cable, who, he believed, was a great financial authority, said—

"In the fiscal controversy now in progress at home we observe an increasing number of references to this country. But we look in vain for any practical suggestion under which India could join in the proposed new departure. On the contrary, it is becoming increasingly evident that the policy so clearly and firmly enunciated in your Excellency's despatch of October 22nd, 1903, is the right policy for this country to adopt, viz., full liberty for India to trade with the whole world upon such terms as may suit her best, and to develop her industrial resources unfettered by engagements with other countries."

Then Lord Curzon alluded to the stand which the Indian Government most properly made against the heavy charge of £750,000 imposed upon Indian revenues for increased pay in the British Army—

"About which we were not consulted, and with which we did not agree. We protested more successfully against the placing upon Indian revenues of the charge for the entertainment of the Indian guests at the Coronation in London. We were also successful in resisting the suggestion that India should pay £400,000 per annum for a call upon a portion of the

British garrison in South Africa. We have now finally established the principle (disputed till a few years ago) that when we lend troops from India, . . . every rupee of the charge from embarkation to return should be defrayed by the Imperial Government."

Upon the question raised by Mr. Cable, the fiscal question, Lord Curzon said—

"I may name one more respect in which the Government of India have, I think, faithfully championed the interests of the general community. I allude to their attitude on the fiscal question. I observe that the hon. Mr. Cable speaking to-day on behalf of the commercial community, has most strongly endorsed the correctness of the position which we took up in our despatch of October 22nd, 1903. A little while ago it was stated with some authority in England—"

that was rather too vague; it was a great authority.

MR. BRODRICK: What authority?

*SIR HENRY FOWLER said he believed it was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham.

" . . . it was stated with some authority in England that that despatch had been drawn up by us in a hurry, and that we were believed to have modified our views. There is no foundation for any such statement. We composed the despatch with full deliberation. It represented our matured opinions. We have not departed from them in any particular; and, if the Government of India were invited to enter a conference, those I am confident would be the instructions with which our delegates from this end would proceed. Our claim is not merely that India should have a voice in the settlement of the question—that none will dispute—but that in any Imperial scheme there should not be imposed upon us a system detrimental to our interests and repugnant to our strongly entertained and unanimous views."

The Secretary of State had referred to the position of the trade of India, and those quotations gave the Indian view upon that point. In reference to Indian immigrants in South Africa, Lord Curzon complained very bitterly of what many thought was the unfair attitude assumed by one of the South African Governments to British-Indian natives residing in Natal. But a greater question arose, with which Lord Curzon dealt as follows—

"Soon after the country (South Africa) came under British administration we addressed the Secretary of State for India, and urged that the opportunity should be taken to remove the restrictions and disabilities in-

spired by the Boer Government on British-Indian subjects. In the course of the correspondence which ensued, we were asked to agree to a scheme for the employment of 10,000 Indian labourers on the construction of Government railways in the Transvaal and Orange-River Colonies; and recognising that the need for Indian labour thus displayed might prove a powerful lever in our hands for securing better treatment for Indians generally in South Africa, we expressed our readiness to consider the proposal if it was likely to lead to substantial concessions in favour of Indians not under indenture. We said that the least that we could accept would be (1) that Indian languages should be included in the literary test applied to new immigrants; (2) that residence in locations should be compulsory only upon those Indians in whose case the restriction is desirable for sanitary reasons; (3) that Indian traders who had established themselves under the former Government should be granted licences permitting them to retain their present places of business; (4) that all Indians of superior class, including all respectable traders and shopkeepers, should be exempted from the Pass Law and the curfew system, and from the other restrictions imposed on the non-white population. The Transvaal authorities declined to concede these demands in full, and we have therefore refused to establish a system of emigration of indentured labourers to that Colony."

It was now known for the first time, from Lord Curzon himself, what was the real state of affairs—that, as they on that side of the House had maintained, the Indian Government would not allow Indian subjects to go as coolies to Africa on the terms proposed. On the whole he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on his statement, which financially was thoroughly sound. The ideas of the Indian Government, both in reference to income and expenditure, and improvements were on the right lines. He believed we were approaching a period of further progress and development, and he cordially agreed with the right hon. Gentleman's railway policy, which he hoped would be carried out. As to the new division of authority he hoped the matter was not finally decided, but that it would receive further consideration, and that once and for all the conflict between the military and the civil management of the Army in the Indian Council would be settled.

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing) said he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton that the speech of the Secretary of State for India was so full of interest that it was desirable that they

Sir Henry Fowler.

should have some general discussion upon that subject before they dealt with the Amendment, which would limit the debate within its four corners. He congratulated the Secretary of State for India upon his speech, and there was no part of his right hon. friend's speech to which he listened with greater pleasure than that in which he described the attitude he proposed to take as regarded the trade and commerce of India. His right hon. friend pointed out that Indian trade and commerce formed by far the largest part of the external trade of the Empire sent to these islands, and he rightly said that nothing should be done in connection with any fiscal proposals which did not give the fullest consideration to the interests of India. He rejoiced to note that the views of the Indian Government on the fiscal question were now identically those which they held when he was in office, and he was also glad to notice that, so far as he could judge, there was very little difference between the views of the present Secretary of State for India on the fiscal question and those of his predecessor. [OPPOSITION laughter, and an HON. MEMBER: In this House.]

The statement which his right hon. friend had made was an astonishingly satisfactory one. There was not a single nation in Europe that could produce as good a financial statement or show as satisfactory a balance sheet as the one that had been placed before the House by his right hon. friend. As the right hon. Gentleman opposite had pointed out, the assets which India obtained by the investment of money in reproductive works balanced her liabilities; and he thought, therefore, his right hon. friend was perfectly right in arriving at the conclusion that, inasmuch as India was now deriving such an enormous benefit from the continuous policy of reproductive expenditure, he was fully justified in removing the limits which he had imposed on this expenditure. He would add just one word of caution. The Return on page 20 of the Secretary of State's Memorandum showed that, while the net result of the major irrigation works was a surplus of £85,000 for the present year, the result of the minor works was a loss of £823,000. Enthusiasts upon irrigation thought they could not spend money in India without

getting a good return, but these figures clearly showed that a considerable amount of this expenditure had not been worth incurring. Therefore, he hoped his right hon. friend, if he did largely increase his railway expenditure, would be very careful that he did not include works that would not be reproductive. Subject to this one criticism, he entirely endorsed all his right hon. friend had said in connection with his proposed railway policy; and, as railway expenditure had been the main cause in enabling them to reduce taxation, he thought it might reasonably be argued that, if this expenditure were increased, it would be possible for the Government, more rapidly in the future than in the past, to reduce the taxes which were now in operation.

He heartily congratulated his right hon. friend on the courage of the Indian Government in making a further reduction of the salt tax. When that tax was reduced some three years ago, the estimated loss by that remission was calculated at nearly £1,000,000 sterling. He noticed that half that loss had been made good by increased consumption, and they might fairly conclude that, with the further reduction of 20 per cent., there would be a still further enhanced consumption. If that occurred, he agreed with his right hon. friend that, in a time of emergency, they had upon that increased consumption a ready source of gaining additional financial assistance.

There was one subject on which his right hon. friend did not say anything, though it was germane to a considerable part of his speech. He spoke, as other Ministers had spoken, about the defence of the North-West Frontier, but his right hon. friend said nothing about the renewal of the agreement with the Amir of Afghanistan. He considered that renewal an integral part of the defence of the North-West Frontier. He had been for so many years habituated to the idea that it was within the bounds of possibility that Russia might invade India by Afghanistan that, perhaps, he was less apprehensive of that contingency occurring than were some of his late colleagues who had only recently taken to studying that

question. He thought they were unduly apprehensive; but he quite agreed that our military arrangements should be made with a view to dealing with that emergency. At the same time, he did not think it was wise policy to make that idea absolutely dominate our whole Indian policy and military establishments. All who had gone thoroughly into this question had become more and more impressed with the enormous difficulty of moving any big army across Afghanistan. But our most important defence was the character of the people who lived in the centre and the East of Afghanistan. They were born fighters, they loved fighting, and they were magnificent shots. A good many of his friends had been somewhat disappointed at the terms of the renewal of the agreement with the Amir—they looked upon the old arrangement as one based on inequality. We gave a great deal more than we obtained, he quite admitted it; but at the same time he held that his right hon. friend and His Majesty's Government were perfectly right, if they found that the Amir had strong objection to any alteration of the terms, in renewing it as it stood. He had always felt that so far as the North-West Frontier of India was concerned political considerations dominated military considerations. If our political relations with the tribes were good we could, if it was necessary, move a force forward, and with their co-operation our lines of communication would be perfectly secure; but if we were on terms of friction with the tribes, and if they looked upon our proceedings with alarm and were disposed to regard us as an invader rather than a defender, then every yard we went outside our frontier increased our difficulties and dangers. If the Amir and the Afghans had a very strong objection to the introduction of railroads and telegraphs, the benefits of which we appreciated, he held that the Home Government acted wisely in continuing the arrangement, as it stood, which was made with His Highness's father. He admitted there might be difficulties, but he held it, above all, to be of prime importance that we should remain on good relations with the Afghans and the tribes on the North-West Frontier.

Lord George Hamilton.

That brought him to the military proposals which Lord Kitchener had laid before the Government, and to which they had assented. These, he understood, would result in largely increasing the effective fighting force of the Indian Army. He thought it was perhaps time that the distribution of our troops should be reconsidered. The old barracks were built in 1860, and the distribution of the troops was based on considerations arising out of the Mutiny; but that danger had passed away; and therefore he thought Lord Kitchener was justified in reconsidering the distribution of troops with a view to their being more efficiently located in case there should be any disturbance on the North-West Frontier. He only made two comments on the changes in the Indian Army. One was that he was sure his right hon. friend would remember that the fighting races of India could not be reorganised on the mathematical lines on which, perhaps, a European administrator would attempt to organise a conscript army; and the second was that he thought they ought to recollect that there were still elements of disorder in India, and that if there was anything like simultaneous co-operation at the time of war, considerable trouble might occur in the interior. Therefore, he thought, they must not altogether disregard the garrison work which our troops would have to perform if we were engaged in a great war on our frontiers.

Perhaps the most interesting part of his right hon. friend's statement was that relating to military re-arrangements. So far as he could gather, the result of the changes was that the Military Member of Council was shorn of all his old duties, and had little connection or touch with the combatant part of the Army, and the Commander-in-Chief had absorbed a good many of the duties which the Military Member previously discharged. It seemed to him rather a patchwork arrangement, and he doubted whether it would stand the test of time. His right hon. friend had said that the position of the Commander-in-Chief in India was somewhat anomalous. He held that the position of Commander-in-Chief in time of peace under modern military conditions was an anachronism.

No great military country had a Commander-in-Chief in time of peace. Every great military country had tried to separate the administrative functions from the executive functions of the Army. One of the reasons why the administration of the British Navy was far superior to that of the Army was that 200 years ago the office of Lord High Admiral was abolished, and a distinction drawn between the executive duties and the administrative duties of the Navy. For that reason he rejoiced that the position of Commander-in-Chief had been abolished here. He would like to see the post of Commander-in-Chief in India abolished also. He did not wish to get rid of Lord Kitchener. He believed the term of office of the Military Member of the Council would shortly come to an end, and he would like to see Lord Kitchener made Minister for War in India with a seat in the Council. What did we want a Commander-in-Chief for? Only twice since he had been in public life had a serious war broken out on the Indian frontier. One was the Afghan War, and the other was the rising of tribes in 1897, but in neither case did the Commander-in-Chief go to the front, because there happened to be officers in the Indian Army whose experience better qualified them for that particular duty. If, however, we had a dual system during a period of stress, there was certain to be friction. He thought it essential that there should be a Military Member permanently on the Council of India, and always close to the Viceroy, and for that reason he thought they could not abolish the post of Military Member. If that member was accurately described as more or less a civilian in charge of certain civilian branches of the Army, he would practically be unable to give that advice in connection with the military part of the Army which was the sole cause of his having a seat on the Council, and, therefore, although, he dared say, the present arrangement might satisfy Lord Kitchener for a time, he earnestly hoped it was not the last word the Government would have to say on the subject. It was essential in an Army that one person should be the head, and it was also clear that the men who discharged administrative functions must be over the men who

discharged executive functions. Although he could understand the motives which induced His Majesty's Government to make the concessions they had made to Lord Kitchener, he did not think that if the change was made it would last. Something more drastic was required, and he hoped, therefore, that the proposal which was now made would not be of such a character that when they wished to reconsider it and ask for further alterations they could be met by the answer that the present changes were final.

As to the Budget he thought his right hon. friend had made an effective reply to the section of public opinion which had declared that British administration was starving India to death. He thought it was to the credit of our race that British administration had conferred such enormous benefits on races outside these islands. Since India was handed over to the Crown, British financiers had converted the old, unstable, profitless, Oriental revenue into a progressive and stable revenue. Lord Curzon had put the coping stone on the edifice, but the credit for the results which had been attained was not due to him alone, but was shared by those who had laid the foundations of Indian finance deep and true. However the credit for India's financial position might be distributed, it redounded to our reputation as a nation that we had been enabled to confer incalculable benefits on the races entrusted to our charge.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) said the noble Lord in the concluding part of his speech had touched on an element of great importance to the Government of India—the element of continuity. It was impossible for any Viceroy of India to take credit, as credit might be taken under any Party system when policy might be subject to violent fluctuations. Policy might fluctuate in India, but it fluctuated within very defined limits, and the reason for that was that India was a country which stood to us in a very peculiar relation. To begin with, the external political questions of India did not concern India.

alone, and probably they would not exist if India stood alone. They were questions which arose in relation to the fluctuations of our external policy, and, therefore, we were in a peculiar degree responsible for the finance of India, and for Indian external affairs. Then, again, no one section of the public could speak for the whole. The immense population of that country was divided into races which varied in habits and religion, and the result was that there were divergencies from the point of view of the people themselves which were not to be paralleled elsewhere. These things had had their outcome in the form of government. The Indian Budget was discussed somewhat sparingly once a year, and one of the reasons for that was that it had not been thought expedient to subject Indian affairs to the immense freedom of discussion to which other affairs were subjected in this House. While it might be a question whether more time should be devoted to the discussion of Indian affairs, it was satisfactory that the debate this year took place on an earlier day in the session than usual. The beneficial result of that change was reflected in the tone and temper of the debate. Instead of a wearied and jaded House examining these things near the close of the session, they had had a very calm discussion. In the speeches of the Secretary of State for India, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton, and the noble Lord the Member for Ealing, they had reflected a good deal of the spirit in which the Government of India was carried on.

He thought the Secretary of State for India was to be congratulated on the favourable way his statement had been received. They were all agreed with him about railways and the salt tax, but he was not sure that when they knew more than they knew now they should be so much with him about the new arrangement between the Commander-in-Chief and the Viceroy's Council. It might be that some of the cogent remarks of the noble Lord who spoke last had their point of application there. He himself owned that there was great difficulty in putting a man of Lord Kitchener's stature in the position of Commander-in-Chief in India. It might

be that that inevitably gave rise to friction in a country where personalities counted for much more than they did here, and where constitutional restraints operated very much less. There was another reflection which this Budget had excited in his mind with reference to the military expenditure. It had increased to £20,000,000, and that he regarded as a very alarming figure. It was quite true that India was in a prosperous condition. Be that as it might, it only showed the greatness of our responsibility in regard to the whole question of the government of India.

He read the other day a report of a meeting which took place in St. James's Hall in the middle of last month, at which a very strong attack was made on the system of government in India, and particularly on Lord Curzon's administration. Lord Curzon was said to have Russianised India. Now it was perhaps the outcome of the absence of representative Government in India that these meetings were held and that these denunciations were made; and he thought that the moral to be drawn from them was that we should be extremely tolerant, careful, and patient in the opportunities of dealing with these people. The Government of India was necessarily bureaucratic because of the mixture of its races and the great variety of political complications. It was, therefore, inevitable that there should be a large number discontented, that some of them should have grievances, and that they should come here and make strong speeches. It was equally inevitable that the Viceroy should be made the target of those attacks. Speaking for himself, and for a large number of hon. Members on that side of the House, he must say that he did not agree with those attacks on Lord Curzon. The noble Lord went out to India as a strong Party man, but he had administered India in a thoroughly non-Party spirit, and had thereby carried out the real traditions of Indian government. He was not sure that his Lordship had not reversed the policy of his predecessors in attacking and subduing the frontier tribes. He left the frontier tribes pretty much to themselves

and to act as a buffer to foreign aggression. There was another thing which Lord Curzon did for which they were always grateful. He showed himself a strong man when a question arose between the action of the British Army and justice to the native population. There were two cases—one of them of very brutal murder—in which Lord Curzon allowed nothing to stand in the way of getting at the aggressors; and when he could not find the aggressors he punished those who ought to have found them. He showed that spirit which, however much complaint it might have raised in the minds of some people, would make his character stand out as one who was perfectly fearless when justice had to be administered. Then there was a third thing which Lord Curzon had done for which they were grateful to him; because not only the noble Lord, but the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State himself, did not disguise that it was Lord Curzon's very emphatic declaration that free trade was the proper policy for India. Therefore, from the Opposition side of the House, they did not take the view that was taken at the meeting to which he had referred, that Lord Curzon had altogether Russianised India, and that his policy ought to be the subject of some violent reversal.

The right hon. Gentleman did not allude to the question of higher education in India. The House knew that there had been a very strong attack on the Viceroy of India for sanctioning what was called the University policy in India. Up to 1901 there were five examining Universities in India, and the preparation for those Universities was carried out by colleges of which there were a great number with no fewer than 23,000 students; and yet their functions in many cases were little more than examining institutions. But the Ministry and Lord Curzon himself came to the conclusion that the state of higher education in India was very unsatisfactory, and they proceeded to work out a new policy which consisted not in the Government taking over the higher education, but in the Government arming the Universities with more power to control the teaching colleges.

He thought that policy was altogether right and that it was working very well. But Lord Curzon had been denounced up hill and down dale for adopting it. It was said that his Lordship was acting in a retrograde fashion. It was quite true that changes had been made in the governing bodies of the Universities in order to help them to do their work more efficiently, and he believed that that process had been for good. Then, again, there was the famous speech of Lord Curzon about which there was great criticism. Lord Curzon used that expression, which he himself would not have used, about the standards of morality in India. Although it might be said that some of those expressions were superfluous, there was nothing in that address which really amounted to fault on his part, or which amounted to anything more than a laudable desire to raise the tone of the morality of India as far as possible. It was rather like a rectorial address. But be that as it might, the whole educational policy in recent times in India seemed to him to have been for good. ✓

Then there was another thing about which a great fuss was going on, namely, the proposal to partition Bengal—to take the north-eastern part off it, and to have Assam and Deccan administered by a separate Government. He had always thought of late years that the necessity for making a change in the arrangements of the administrative government of India was becoming more and more apparent, and he should, therefore, be disposed to stand very closely to the proposed partitioning of Bengal. There were always some people disappointed—Civil servants and military men—but that showed the necessity of scrutinising the way in which the government of India was carried on. On the other hand, they must remember that the Government of India was not a Party Government. He did not wish it to go forth that there was any section in that House who were disposed to identify themselves with criticisms which he thought went far beyond what was legitimate or right. On the other hand, he did not wish it to be thought that they were otherwise than vigilant in keeping a watchful eye on things which

were constantly going on in India. But when they came to the frontier policy, and to the military expenditure which that frontier policy necessitated, then he did think these were questions to which the very closest attention should be given. Although it was well that they should on this occasion have had this debate thus early, still it was not satisfactory that a single day in the session should be given up to the discussion of matters of such momentous magnitude. He hoped the time would come when the very force of public opinion would make them adopt a better way of doing things. He did feel that those who held these meetings and who complained that sufficient attention was not given to Indian affairs had a grain of truth on their side. India had not got representative government—and he did not say that the time had come when India should have representative government—but the very fact that there was no representative Government, and possibly no prospect of it, ought to make the obligation on our part all the more to see that these things were scrutinised and watched. He thought the right hon. Gentleman who had presented that day so admirable a record of successful policy would have conferred another obligation not only on the people of India, but on the people of Great Britain, if he succeeded in introducing the useful precedent of getting more time devoted to the discussion in Parliament of Indian affairs.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India showed how India had prospered under our rule. But the question which ought to be asked by hon. Members was whether India was contented with our rule, and whether it had reason to be contented. Now, he thought there was a good deal to be said on the other side. He believed that India at the present time was not in that satisfactory condition which the right hon. Member attributed to it; and that there was a large amount of discontent in that country which did not find expression. Time was when India was the happy hunting ground of adventurers who

exploited the country in their own interest. The result was the Great Mutiny. After the Mutiny we might have held the country by force and prevented the spread of western civilisation. Or we should have striven to govern the country according to Indian ideas and through Indian chiefs. But we had followed neither course. We had opened up the country, and broken down the barriers of language and of distance. We had done everything we could to encourage the spread of education. They had Indian Gentlemen in the House who might make or unmake Ministries, and yet they had no say whatever in the government of their own country. That was both an anomaly and an anachronism.

SIR J. FERGUSSON [†](Manchester, N.E.) said that one of the Gentlemen referred to had been Commissioner of a Native State.

*MR. CATHCART WASON said that he had nevertheless no share in the general government of his country. The Native States were in a semi-civilised condition. The Secretary of State said that a Commissioner should be a Judge, a lawyer, and have a variety of other knowledge; and in such circumstances it was impossible that a native should have any important share in the government of his country. The Secretary for State also said that they were on the eve of great changes. He sincerely trusted they were. He did not think that this country had very much to be proud of in connection with the government of India, except the material matters alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman. The chief point to which he desired to direct attention was what was called the great Charter of Liberty in the time of William IV., which was as follows—

“That no native of the said territories nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said company.”

If Indians had a voice in the administration of their country, and if their grievances were fairly considered, they would not have the treatment now given them meted out in Australia and South Africa. Had any protest been made against this

scandalous treatment? Indians were not allowed to undertake the meanest employment; and ships were not even allowed to carry the Australian mails because they had coolies aboard, after all, His Majesty's faithful subjects. Was that in accordance with the solemn treaty entered into at the time of the Mutiny? Could anyone maintain that the position of Indians in South Africa was at all reasonable or just? Their position was far better before the war. Then they were admitted to the country; now they appeared to be absolutely shut out. Indeed, the British Government themselves instructed counsel to appear against the Indian contention in South Africa; and a British Indian, no matter what his *status* or qualifications might be, if he were not a refugee, could not possibly enter the country. This country was solely responsible for this measure of injustice which was meted out to fellow-subjects of the King; and it was the duty of hon. Members to raise their voices against such action as had been taken in Australia and South Africa, and a strong Government would have let Australian and South African millionaires have had their opinions freely and roughly.

They had heard much about the prosperity of India; but the right hon. Gentleman did not allude to one class which comprised between 80 per cent. and 90 per cent. of the population, viz., the class which depended on agriculture for a living. It would be well if they could hear more of the wants and desires of this class through the medium of, say, village communes. These people were poor to an intolerable degree. Famines were constantly arising, but not through any scarcity of corn. There was plenty of food in the country; but the people had no money with which to buy it. Very much of the poverty which existed was caused by the excessive taxation which was imposed, the burden of taxes on the land in relation to gross produce being higher than in any other country in the world. It ran, he was informed, up to something like 20 per cent., and if that statement were not true it ought to be contradicted. The Secretary of State, in reply to his hon. friend the Member for Ross-shire, stated that in Madras in 1900-1 there were 15,000 evictions,

the total amount realised being 25s. for each home. The people who were unable to pay the Government taxes were evicted, and thrown out to pick up a living as best they could. Few hon. Members could spend more than a month or two in India, and their knowledge was painfully limited. India was the most important portion of His Majesty's dominions, and it was intolerable that Indians should not in some way or other be entitled to bring forward their grievances, and also what they thought of the great fiscal change with which the Empire was threatened. They knew the opinion of the Viceroy, but it would be well to know what was the opinion of the great minds of India. He begged to move.

*Mr. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire) said before proceeding to discuss this Motion he would like to congratulate the House on the excellent Budget laid before it, showing a surplus of £3,500,000 sterling for last year and almost as much for the coming one. But most of this future surplus was most wisely given back to the people by the remission of 25 per cent. of the salt tax, by large grants for local purposes, and primary education. He adopted as his own the language of Mr. Gokhale of Poona, the ablest Indian member of the Viceregal Council, and a man universally respected in India. That gentleman said—

"There is but one feeling throughout the country—and it is a feeling of deep and unalloyed satisfaction as to the manner in which the Government of India have decided to apply about 3½ crores to measures of remission of taxation, administrative improvement, and the general well-being of the people."

For six years the Indian Exchequer had had continual surpluses amounting to over £20,000,000 sterling, and if we added the large sum accumulated as a gold reserve fund, the total came to over £30,000,000. The main cause of this was the adoption of the gold standard and the artificial raising of the rupee from 1s. 1d. to 1s. 4d., which reduced the loss by exchange enormously; but for this the rupee would have sunk to 10d., and the Government would have been almost driven into bankruptcy. But one of the greatest grievances of the agricul-

tural population was that it greatly added to the burden of their debts to the money-lenders, and also to the weight of their assessment. They had to pay in rupees worth 1s. 4d. instead of rupees worth 10d. or 1s., and for this cause the universal feeling of India was that the Government was bound to give compensation to the ryots, who numbered three-fourths or four-fifths of the whole population, for this grievous burden imposed upon them.

It would be unfortunate if the fulness of the Indian Exchequer misled the British people as to the condition of that vast population. Might he tell the House the impressions he derived from attending the twentieth Indian National Congress which met in Bombay last December. For three days they listened to a series of most able speeches delivered by delegates from all parts of India; the language was English, often eloquent, always moderate and respectful, and the arguments were weighty and often convincing. He could not conceive a greater tribute to English education than this great assembly of more than 1,000 delegates and 10,000 spectators as orderly and decorous as any assembly that ever met in England. There was now in India a body of intelligent opinion, upheld by a native Press, which they must deal with sympathetically if they wanted to escape great trouble in the future. He was glad to have this opportunity—perhaps the last he would have—of voicing the grievances and aspirations of the Indian people whose interests he had tried to serve since his first visit to India forty-two years ago.

There were two great classes into which Indian grievances may be divided—the first might be called political, the second economical. The educated classes of India, many of whom had been trained in this country, were dissatisfied at the very small share they had in the administration of their country—they held extremely few appointments in the higher grades of service. He should say that, roughly, nineteen-twentieths of all the appointments of £1,000 a year and over were held by Europeans, also the great bulk between £300 and £1,000 a year. A very few Indians entered the Im-

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perial service by examination in England, and those alone rose to high appointments. The provincial service intended for Indians to enter by competition was now reserved for nomination, and this caused great dissatisfaction. The Government of India was as purely bureaucratic as that of Russia, the only difference being that our officials were honest and capable, and sincerely desirous of doing their best for the people. But the time had come when the ablest and best of the Indian people should be associated with ourselves in the government of the country. Local government was slowly growing in India and was training the people in self-government; the legislative councils were most valuable means of eliciting Indian opinion, but the official members outvoted the elected, and the various Governors could overrule their decisions. Our system of administration was perhaps the only one practicable at first, but it could not go on permanently, and the time had come to overhaul it, and to give India some moderate form of representative government. He believed that most of the British residents in India knew that this must come sooner or later. Many were not averse to it if it were brought about gradually. It was the only means by which India could be kept loyal, and we were bound by all our national traditions to bring it about gradually. He was certain that if we went on the reactionary lines that had been in favour of late years we should alienate the sentiment of the people and prepare great difficulties and even dangers in future. This was not a question which could be settled in India. The bureaucracy there would not voluntarily surrender their power; officials clung to power all the world over. According to Walter Bagehot—

“The trained official hates the rude, untrained public—he thinks they are stupid, ignorant, reckless, that they cannot tell their own interests. A bureaucracy is sure to think that its duty is to augment official power, official business, or official members rather than leave free the energies of mankind, it overdoes the quantity of government as well as impairs its quality.”

We had one of the best bureaucracies in India which the world ever saw, yet it partook of these faults, and it was

necessary that we should gradually create a more healthy form of government.

He would venture to commend to the Government some moderate reforms which might safely be conceded at once. Why should we not place three or four eminent natives of India on the London Council which advised the Secretary for India? The Indian Secretary had no means of knowing what the 300,000,000 of India desired. He was usually a statesman who had not visited India, he was surrounded by British officials and ex-officials whose interests were not identical with those of the people; and, unknown to himself, he was biassed against Indian opinion; and he ought to have the opportunity of knowing first hand what the Indian people thought. We might have escaped the two Afghan Wars and the Tibet Expedition, and perhaps even the Indian Mutiny, if the Home Government had possessed councillors like Sir Salar Jung, or Sir Madhavo Rao or Professor Gokhale. These delegates from India should be elected by the legislative councils and would be drawn from the *élite* of the Indian people. He would also recommend that the Governor-General should have at least one eminent Indian gentleman in his executive council, that was to say, his Cabinet where all great decisions were taken. It would be deeply appreciated by the Indian people and they deserved this mark of confidence. Lastly, he would suggest that three Members should be elected to this House by the electorate of the three Presidencies that now returned the members of the Legislative Councils of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. Parliament would then hear at first hand the voice of India which it could not do under existing arrangements.

The second great reform required in India was economical. Much was heard about the prosperity of India. When he visited the country forty-two years ago he was much struck by the extreme poverty of the people. He went there again last year, expecting to see a great improvement, but there appeared to be the same picture of half-starved, half-clad people, the same miserable mud huts, and the same dirty villages as there were forty years ago.

The agricultural population, some four-fifths of the whole, was steeped in poverty and hopelessly in debt. In the districts scourged by famine they could barely live, even in good seasons, and in bad seasons they would starve wholesale unless fed by Government. The ground was over-cropped and exhausted, manure was used for fuel, and the yield was miserably poor. Most of the ryots paid interest, never less than 12 per cent., sometimes 36 per cent., to the money-lenders; they were virtually their serfs, and would never extricate themselves except by Government help. He believed that in many districts a composition of debts could be carried out voluntarily if the Government advanced even one-third of the amount. The money-lenders knew that their advances were irrecoverable, and they would accept a moderate compensation. He believed if the Government advanced £50,000,000 it would clear from debt the greater part of the Indian peasantry, and they could borrow this for £1,500,000 per annum. They had paid off £20,000,000 of debt in the last few years, nearly all the railways in India would become Government property in fifty years, and they might undertake this immense reform even without charging the peasantry anything except interest. It would be full compensation for the cruel suffering caused by raising the rupee when the gold standard was adopted. It would also be needful to exempt from seizure for debt the homesteads and farm stocks in the future, so as to prevent a fresh pile of debts being reared; and also to start village or co-operative banks like those in Germany, Denmark, and other Continental countries. Irrigation should also be encouraged in every possible way, for water was the life of India as of Egypt, and wonderful results had been recently obtained in the Punjab and Scinde. The Report of the Scott-Moncrieff Commission should be pressed on as fast as possible. Then a considerable remission should be made of the assessment on Bombay, Madras, and the Central Provinces, where it was much too high.

There was no need to spend so much on the Army now that Lord Kitchener had so largely increased its

mobility. Russia had lost power and prestige in Asia to an enormous extent, and when the war was over, as it seemed likely to be very soon, she would need several years of peace for internal reform. The Indian Government had a rare opportunity, with a full Exchequer, first-rate credit, and assured peace, to undertake great domestic reforms. It was many years since they had had such an opportunity, and let them now use it to the full. But there was one more branch of improvement that was essential—he meant the growth of industries. Except in Bombay and a few manufacturing centres there was virtually no industrial development. The people were too poor and too ignorant of mechanical science. Capital was too scarce and the rate of interest far too high. He failed to see how India could be made prosperous without availing herself of cheap foreign capital and skill. She would have to do what the United States did in its early stages, and what the British Colonies and the South American Republics were now doing, for all these countries had been developed by foreign capital, and all were prospering. Yet the feeling of the Congress party in India was strongly opposed to it; they thought it drained away the wealth of the country; they pointed to the excess of exports over imports, which was fully £20,000,000 a year, as a proof that it impoverished the country. They failed to see that even a greater excess of exports existed in the United States, Australia, the Argentine, and Brazil. Yet these were the most thriving countries in the world. The United States exported £100,000,000 more than she imported, yet she was the most prosperous country in the world. There was one point, however, where Indian sentiment must be respected or great evil would accrue. The Government must beware of giving foreign syndicates concessions similar to those of South Africa. There was vast mineral wealth in India, and it must be opened up, and probably it could not be done without foreign capital; but the greatest care must be taken to prevent oppression of coolie labour. All the contract labour, such as existed on the tea plantations, must be disallowed, and the State must reserve its full rights as a ground landlord. As far as possible preference should always be

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given to the people of India in granting concessions.

Another suggestion he would make was that technical education and industrial training must be spread all over India. The education now given produced pleaders, clerks, and journalists, but it did not produce engineers or mechanics or chemists, and this was one cause of the extreme poverty. Why was it that the late M. Tata's splendid gift of twenty-five lakhs for an institution of research was still unused? It caused much unfavourable comment in India. The last subject to which he would refer was the demand "that periodical Parliamentary inquiries into the administration be revived." These occurred every twenty years in the days of the East India Company and were most useful. In the year 1886 a similar inquiry was proposed by Lord Randolph Churchill when Secretary for India, and was included in the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Gladstone commented on it as follows—

"I am of opinion that Her Majesty's Government are eminently right in asking the House to appoint the Committee. I trust that it will be a carefully selected Committee and that it will be efficient in proportion to the greatness of the subject; and that it will devote itself to the subject with a zeal and diligence such as we have known in former years and former generations."

It was quite impossible adequately to discuss Indian affairs in that House. They were full of complexity, and very few Members of the House had a personal knowledge of India. An exhaustive Parliamentary inquiry would be invaluable. It would lead to organic changes in the Government of India which were now fully ripe, and which we dared not delay except at the risk of ultimately losing that country. He would conclude by quoting the words of one of the greatest of England's pro-Consuls, Lord Cromer, spoken before he left India, twenty years ago, when he acted as Finance Minister to Lord Northbrook—

"No one who watches the signs of the times in India with even moderate care can doubt that we have entered upon a period of change. The spread of education, the increasing influence of a free Press, the substitution of legal for discretionary administration, the progress of railways and telegraphs, the easier communication with Europe, and the more ready influx of European ideas, are beginning

to produce a marked effect upon the people. New ideas are springing up. New aspirations are being called forth. The power of public opinion is growing daily. Such a condition of affairs is one in which the task of Government, and especially of a despotic Government, is beset with difficulties of no light kind. To move too fast is dangerous, but to lag behind is more dangerous still. The problem is how to deal with this new-born spirit of progress, raw and superficial as in many respects it is, so as to direct it into the right course, and to derive from it all the benefits which its development is capable of ultimately conferring upon the country, and at the same time to prevent it from becoming, through blind indifference or stupid repression, a source of serious political danger. It is only what ought to be expected by every thoughtful man that, after fifty years of a free Press and thirty years of expanding education, with European ideas flowing into the country on every side, and old indigenous customs, habits, and prejudices breaking down, changes should be taking place in the thoughts, the desires, and the aims of the intelligent and educated men of the country which no wise and cautious Government can afford to disregard, and to which they must gradually adapt their system of administration if they do not wish to see it shattered by forces which they have themselves called into being, but which they have failed to guide and control."

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words 'considering the great importance of Indian questions and the desire of the Indian people to lay their grievances before Parliament and to ask for improvement in the administration of their country, it is absolutely necessary, in the interests alike of India and the United Kingdom, that periodical Parliamentary inquiries into the administration of India be revived, that the salary of the Secretary of State for India be placed upon the British Estimates, and that greater opportunities be given for the Parliamentary discussion of Indian affairs.'"—
(*Mr. Cathcart Watson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON said that as one who had, for twenty years of his life, served in India in many capacities, and who had continued to take a very deep interest in Indian affairs, he should like to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India on the admirable statement he had made to the House—both as to its manner and as to its substance. The right hon. Gentleman had shown that there was an increasing and abundant prosperity in every department of Indian affairs—a state of

things which was wholly incompatible with the pictures which had been drawn as to the condition of India by hon. Gentlemen opposite who had moved and seconded the Amendment. Both these hon. Gentlemen had covered a great deal of ground, and the tendency of their remarks was that the people of India were in a starving, destitute, and ignorant condition.

*MR. SAMUEL SMITH: I did not say that the whole of them were in that condition, but that a large part of the agricultural population were so.

*MAJOR EVANS GORDON said that seeing the agricultural population of India was 80 per cent. of the total population, it was wholly impossible that these should be starving and destitute under the conditions of prosperity which existed, and as was shown by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India. The fact was that, without entering into details, the hon. Gentleman and those who thought with him, had taken his opinion from the statements made in what was called the Indian Congress. The value of these opinions was very much to be discounted. The hon. Gentleman opposite had just told the House that it was the opinion of that Congress that the investments of British capital in India were bleeding the country to death! He maintained that people who held such an entirely erroneous and ridiculous opinion as that must be listened to with the greatest caution when they spoke on other economic questions. Both the mover and seconder of the Amendment said that it was a grievance that Indian natives had not a larger share in the government of the country. These hon. Gentlemen insisted that there should be a progressive increase in the number of native Indians who should take a share in the government. But what had that progressive increase been during the last twenty years? The number of natives employed in all branches of administration had steadily increased until now all the subordinate positions in every department of public life were filled by natives, while the number holding higher appointments was being steadily

increased—even in the case of Judges of the High Court itself—a position higher even than that of a Lieutenant-Governor of a province. The hon. Gentlemen who moved and seconded the Amendment said, “Let us consult the wishes of the people of India.” He could assure these hon. Gentlemen that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred the dumb multitudes of India—not frothy rhetoricians of the Indian Congress—would far prefer to see Englishmen in responsible administrative positions in India rather than anyone belonging to their own faith or nationality. He believed that if a plebiscite of the Indian people were taken, fewer native Indians would be employed in administrative posts than at present. The confidence reposed by the natives of India in the English Indian Civil servants had always been high indeed; and they would rather entrust the administration of their affairs to Englishmen than to people of their own race and faith.

The hon. Gentleman the Member for Flint Boroughs argued that the debt of the agricultural population should be liquidated by the Indian Government. Steps in that direction had been taken under the Deccan Ryots Act, and other efforts of that kind had been tried with more or less success; but to suggest that the Government of India should liquidate the debt of all the agricultural population of India was the wildest proposition ever made within the walls of that House. If the debts of these ryots were paid off to-day, they would instantly begin to borrow on the morrow, and the position of the people would not be improved. The only position which would be improved was that of the money-lender, who was an admitted evil in the country. Money for funerals and weddings would be certain to be borrowed. He regarded the demand in the Amendment for constant Parliamentary inquiry into the administration of India as very mischievous. To drag Indian affairs into the Party arena would be a great misfortune; and these frequent Parliamentary discussions would not lead to the better government of India in any way, or benefit the people of that country. If that were the policy of hon. Gentlemen

opposite, he doubted whether they would ever find a Viceroy willing to represent them in India under such conditions. The present prosperity of India had been brought about in spite of great calamities and difficulties by a wise and statesman-like policy of development, which had made it possible to withstand such visitations as famine and plague. He himself nursed one of the first cases of plague in India, and he could endorse what his right hon. friend had said about the superstition which prevailed. He had been through many great epidemics, and he knew the extraordinary unwillingness of the natives to take precautions. But in spite of all these terrible disasters, which would have paralysed India in former times, they found prosperity increasing and taxation decreasing. That had been arrived at by steady administration, by the extension of railways and irrigation works which had enabled the country to withstand these great shocks. He went to India in 1877, the year of the great Madras famine; the position of affairs was very different then. Millions of people were dying of starvation, not because there was no money or grain in the country, but because means of communication were so bad that food could not be conveyed to the people. India was now in a permanent position to withstand the great national calamities with which it was threatened.

The arrangements proposed with regard to the military administration he approved of; but he should view with great alarm any proposal to abolish the office of Commander-in-Chief, which had an immense personal importance in the eyes of the Native Army. He should look with very great regret to the abolition of an office which had been held by many distinguished officers. To the Native Army the Commander-in-Chief was known as the “War Lord,” and his office and person were held in the highest respect. He was glad that this old controversy as regarded military administration which had lasted for many years was to be ended. The arrangement proposed by his right hon. friend appeared to him to be sound; and, in the main, wise, statesmanlike, and scientific. He was not quite sure what the position of

the Adjutant-General was to be under the new arrangement; but he had no doubt Lord Kitchener would settle that. There was one point to which the Secretary of State did not refer.

The Papers which had been laid before Parliament seemed to justify the conclusion that our relations with Afghanistan were at least no worse than they had been for many years past. The British Mission under Sir Louis Dane was hospitably received at Cabul, and returned in safety. At Cabul a brief treaty was formally negotiated, and it renewed with the present Amir the political engagements which had subsisted for more than twenty years between the late Amir and the Indian Government. The gist of those engagements was that so long as the Amir shaped his foreign policy in accordance with our views, the integrity of Afghanistan against Russian aggression was guaranteed by the British Government, and a very large subsidy was paid from Indian revenues to the Afghan ruler. There appeared to have been no advance whatever beyond this position. The point which he ventured to urge upon the attention of the House was that this position, although it might not indicate in itself any change for the worse, was, nevertheless, most unreasonable, unsatisfactory, and full of dangerous possibilities.

It was a matter of common knowledge that Russia was rapidly completing her railway communications and massing large forces along the Afghan frontier in Central Asia, and that Herat lay at her mercy. We were absolutely bound as a matter both of honour and expediency to defend the Afghan frontier which we demarcated in conjunction with Russia. Yet the ruler of Afghanistan, our ally, would not make, or allow us to make, a yard of railway or even of telegraph line within his country. We had been told by high authority that it was fatal in dealing with Oriental potentates to try and force their inclination. He would be the last to dispute the general correctness of this view. But Oriental potentates had a keen eye for their own interests and their own safety, and he could not believe that it was beyond the resources of diplomacy

to convince the Amir that his safety lay in allowing us at least to establish telegraphic and railway communication between Quetta and his remote exposed frontier in the Herat province. He submitted that the Indian Government should leave no plan untried of gaining these moderate concessions, or rather these moderate signs of co-operation, from our ally, and that until they had been gained our relations with Afghanistan must be regarded as dangerously unsatisfactory. It must be remembered that if it suited Russia to do so a pretext could easily be found for an advance upon, and a "temporary" occupation of Herat. Without telegraphic communication a considerable period of time would elapse before any news of what was going on in the Herat province could reach this country. A move of this kind on the part of Russia, if not probable, was perfectly possible, and if it were to take place, had the Government considered the answer that they would make to it? A railway could no doubt speedily be laid to Kandahar and the army of the Amir could be reinforced in that direction. But this would not suffice, as it would be essential to remove the shock of a collision as far from the Indian frontier as possible and to prevent the establishment of Russia in the rich Herat province. Without better means of communication than at present existed this operation would be attended with great, if not insuperable, difficulty, and he trusted that matters would not be allowed to rest where they were, and that in his own interest the attention of the Ameer would be steadily called to the dangers of the present situation. He remembered the days of the Durbar between the Amir and Lord Dufferin, when it was believed they were on the brink of war, and when the doors of the Indian Treasury were opened, and the rupees were poured out in what might be truly called a silver stream to provide for the operations preliminary to a conflict. That was an utterly wasteful procedure, and he rejoiced to think that Lord Kitchener, the Indian Government, and his right hon. friend were taking time by the forelock and making their preparations now. The £2,500,000 which it was proposed to spend this year might prove to be a great economy in the end.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) joined in the congratulations to the Government for having given so early a day for the discussion of Indian affairs, and expressed the hope that the practice now initiated would be rigorously adhered to in coming years. The object of the Amendment he now supported was to enable the dumb millions of India, to whom the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down alluded, to make their views known in this House. The Motion emphasised what would be generally admitted on all sides, namely, the desirability of the mind of the House being better informed and the people of this country becoming more deeply interested in Indian affairs. Everybody who took an interest in the matter was amazed at the magnitude of Indian affairs. Every problem that could interest politicians and administrators was to be found in India. In regard to this matter there were two schools of thought—that of the rulers and that of the ruled. With regard to the rulers he desired to emphasise the opinion expressed by his hon. friend the Member for Flintshire in that House, namely, an admiration for the splendid past services of those who had been called upon to govern that great dependency. He himself felt that the administration of India had in many ways been an arena in which the best qualities of our race had been shown, but on the other hand there were the views of the governed, and it was of supreme importance that those views should be recognised. Western civilisation and education must in time make a difference in the relations between the governed and the governing classes, and it was the duty of every Member of that House to acquaint himself with the facts, and endeavour, as far as he could, to meet the problems which arose in the Indian situation. The Indian National Congress represented the educated native opinion of the country; as far as public opinion in India could be expressed politically it was declared by that body, and that being so it was a great mistake for any Government to take up a hostile or unsympathetic attitude towards it.

What was the peculiar function of Parliament in the government of India?

He submitted that so long as India was governed, as at present, an active participation of the Imperial Parliament was essential. He remembered the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton once declaring that every Member of that House should regard himself as a Member for India. Constitutionally the Secretary of State was responsible to that House for the Government of India. That was the foundation principle of the statute upon which the Government of India was built up, but, owing to Parliamentary developments at home and to administrative changes in India, it had practically ceased to exist. With reference to the Motion before the House, the first suggestion was that there should be a periodical Parliamentary inquiry into the affairs of India. That was simply a revival of the inquiries that were held up to the time of the transference of the Government of India from the East India Company to the Secretary of State. Every one of those inquiries was followed by useful and beneficent results. The inquiry of 1817 practically established the principle of free trade in regard to the commerce of India; that of 1833 produced the declaration of the right of Indians to be eligible for every office under Government; and the inquiry of 1853 led to the abolition of patronage in the Civil Service. It might be said that a great change had come over the situation since 1858. That was obviously true. But with the growth of the power and efficiency of the Government of India it necessarily followed, especially having regard to the changed conditions of the Parliamentary machine here, that the Secretary of State was guided in the main by the opinions expressed by the Viceroy and his Council in India. The suggested inquiry was really in keeping with the trend of affairs throughout the world in the direction of the consolidation of the Empire. The underlying idea of Colonial Conferences was from time to time to bring the mind of the self-governing Colonies in touch with the mind of the mother country on important questions affecting their respective interests. Up to the present India had been left out of account in connection with these Colonial Conferences; but he submitted that if it was desirable that

the self-governing Colonies should have these discussions every five years, it was much more necessary that India should every twenty years have an opportunity of making her views known by means of a Parliamentary inquiry.

The second suggestion was that the salary of the Secretary of State should be placed upon the British Estimates. He had himself moved a Resolution in that direction, and would now merely remind the House that the Indian Expenditure Commission specifically recommended that that should be done.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned until this Evening's Sitting.

----- *EVENING SITTING.* -----

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Order read, for resuming [adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [21st June], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair (for Committee on East India Revenue Accounts)."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, and add the words, 'considering the great importance of Indian questions and the desire of the Indian people to lay their grievances before Parliament and to ask for improvement in the administration of their country, it is absolutely necessary, in the interests alike of India and the United Kingdom, that periodical Parliamentary inquiries into the administration of India be revived, that the salary of the Secretary of State for India be placed upon the British Estimates, and that greater opportunities be given for the Parliamentary discussion of Indian affairs.'"—(*Mr. Cathcart Watson.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (continuing his speech) said when the House adjourned he was referring to the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure that £50,000 should

be placed on the British Estimates. The paragraph ran—

"This contribution may be made the subject either of a charge upon the Consolidated Fund or an annual Vote on the charges of the establishment of the Secretary of State for India."

On a previous occasion when this matter was debated, the noble Lord the Member for Ealing, then Secretary of State for India, replied that the recommendations of the Royal Commission had been carried out by a deduction of £50,000 from the annual sum paid by India to this country. But it was evident that the intentions of the Commission were that this charge should be placed upon the British Estimates in order to give the House an opportunity to discuss the administration of India on the Vote for the salary of the Secretary of State. By that means they would get another day's discussion on Indian affairs, and many important consequences would follow. The circumstances of India had greatly changed since 1858, and it was very desirable that there should be no distinction made between the position of the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. If anything occurred in the Colonies to which public attention ought to be drawn, the matter could be brought up and a discussion raised on the salary of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and it was very desirable that this right should be accorded to the Indian people.

With regard to the employment of Indians in the public service, special attention had been called to the matter in the Council of India on the debate on the Indian Budget by Mr. Gokhale, whose ability, high character, and lofty ideals were generally recognised. In the previous year the Viceroy had made a statement of the two principles governing this matter, and that statement was followed by executive action which created considerable feeling throughout the country, and that made it necessary to emphasise the point on this occasion. As he understood, what the Viceroy said was that the pledges given on that question had been fulfilled, and that there had been a progressive increase in the number of appointments. Lord Curzon said, also, last March, that the Commission which

sat in 1887 to consider this question made certain recommendations which had been more than carried out. But that Commission sat in 1887, and it was now highly desirable that a further inquiry should be held as to these questions by a Committee or Commission absolutely independent of the Government of India, who were bound to have special interest in the finding. What gave rise to the feeling in India upon this question was the fact that while in such a department as that of Public Works, for instance, there were sixty-one higher positions with salaries of from 1,200 to 3,000 rupees a month, all of which positions were held by Europeans, and in the Police Department there were sixty-eight higher positions with salaries of from 900 to 3,000 rupees a month, also held exclusively by Europeans, it was an entirely new practice to allow positions carrying from forty to sixty rupees a month to be filled by Europeans, because it had always been regarded that as far as possible these should be given to Indian candidates. Yet the following notification appeared in the *Calcutta Gazette* in May last as the latest enactment of the Bengal Government—

“In the office of the Board of Revenue, Lower Provinces, 30 per cent. of the appointments on pay of forty rupees and upwards will also be reserved for Europeans and Eurasians.”

It was not strange that it was feared that this step was the beginning of new policy in regard to opposition. Another matter which had been regarded with apprehension for many years from the Indian standpoint was the administration of Excise in India. There had been during the last thirty years a steady growth of the revenue obtained from the taxation of liquor in India. In 1874–5 £1,753,000 was obtained from this source. In 1894–5 it was £3,965,000, and in 1904–5 it would amount to £5,254,300. He was, of course, fully aware that the taxation of liquor had increased greatly, but it had not, in his opinion, increased sufficiently to account for so great an increase of revenue. It had been claimed by the Finance Member in his speech in the council in March last that there had been a reduction of 30 per cent. in the number of liquor shops in the last twenty years, but the almost universal testimony of missionaries and other residents of India was

that drinking habits in India were increasing year by year. And, whilst desirous of giving the Government full credit for the reform which had been recently instituted, it was evident that the drink problem in India demanded constant and serious consideration. Although it was said that very little good came from discussing Indian affairs in that House, he might remind the House that a Resolution moved by the hon. Member for Flintshire, in April, 1889, in connection with the liquor law of India, resulted in a despatch being framed upon the subject which had largely regulated Excise administration ever since; and that on another occasion, when the attention of the House was called to the drink evil on the tea plantations of Assam, the result was an inquiry, at the instance of the Indian Government, which in due course resulted in a Report, which led the Indian Government quite recently to introduce a number of very useful reforms. Those facts showed the utility of bringing the mind of Parliament to bear on these questions, which deeply affect India. Another fact that ought to be remembered at the present time was the deep impression made by the victories of Japan on Indian opinion. They did not know what the ultimate effect of the new situation would be, but of this he was certain, that the present time was an opportune moment for this country to show a special interest in the task of administering India, and for Parliament to consider the most pressing grievances put forward by the people of India. If such a Motion as this were to be favourably received by this House he thought it would be bound to have a beneficial effect on the administration of India.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had placed on that part of the Amendment now under discussion which provided for the holding of periodical Parliamentary inquiries a construction which was not apparent on the face of it. He confessed he had considerable sympathy with the Amendment, and rejoiced to think that the fact of their being engaged in the discussion of the Indian Budget so early in the session was in itself a proof that this

Mr. Herbert Roberts.

House was to have in the future a better opportunity than it had had in past years of considering Indian affairs. He had often pleaded for the appointment of an earlier day for that purpose than the very far end of the session when it had become customary for many years past to discuss the Budget, and just before the Easter adjournment he placed a Motion to that effect on the Order-book. He congratulated the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for India on having been the means of establishing a precedent which he fervently trusted would be adhered to in future years, and thanked them for having responded to the wishes not only of those hon. Members who took an interest in the affairs of the Indian Empire, but of the people of India generally, for the grant of an earlier day in the session. In the sense that it furnished a better opportunity for discussing those affairs, it answered to the last part of the Amendment to a certain extent.

As regarded the demand for placing the salary of the Secretary of State on the Estimates, if that could be done consistently with reserving a special day for the Indian Budget as heretofore, he should agree to the suggestion with pleasure, for the simple reason that that arrangement would enlarge the Parliamentary opportunities for the consideration of Indian matters. But if the acceptance of the suggestion involved the withdrawal of the special day, he failed to see what good would result from the change, and would prefer the maintenance of the present arrangement, which, at all events, secured a full day for India. The remaining portion of the Amendment, which sought to secure "periodical inquiries into the administration of India," was the most important and debatable part of it, and required elucidation. It assumed the existence of "grievances" against that administration, which evidently were to be the subject of the periodical inquiries. The hon. Member who had just sat down had, however, construed it differently. He said it was meant to secure to India some such opportunities for the discussion of important matters relating to her as were secured to the self-governing Colonies by the conferences held by the Colonial

Secretary with the Premiers and representatives of the Colonies. If that were so, he would certainly support that part of the Amendment also.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS explained that what he meant to say was that the suggested inquiries would serve the same purpose for India as the Colonial Conference did for the Colonies, and would also embrace an investigation into grievances or complaints.

*SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGREE said that would mean the institution by the Imperial Government of a sort of impeachment and trial of the administrators of Indian affairs appointed by themselves. It was true there were periodical inquiries instituted by Parliament against the East India Company; but the circumstances were quite different to those of the present day. Then India was practically under the rule of a private company, and when it required the renewal of its charter, Parliament was bound to see that the stewardship of the affairs of the large Empire committed to its care had been properly discharged. The commercial rights and monopolies enjoyed by the company were also a source of irritation and possibly of just grievance to the mercantile and trading communities of Great Britain and India, and there was room for investigation as to the way the company had exercised its privileges. All such causes had disappeared, and any periodical inquiry, now, into the administration of India would only reduce itself to an investigation of charges levelled against those who had been entrusted with it. That would certainly affect the prestige of British rule, and do no good whatever to the people of India. What was most desirable for the welfare of that country was the steady fostering of a sense of contentment and confidence in her Government, affording a stimulus to the people to work out their salvation by a diligent pursuit of the paths of reform and progress, and by development of industries. The institution of a system of periodical inquiries with the idea of investigating

into complaints against their administrators would act quite in a contrary direction, raise hopes doomed to disappointment, and, without resulting in any practical good that could well be imagined, tend to the straining of relations between the people and the Government. Unless those who advocated the Amendment could show that the inquiries suggested were meant to serve the purpose of friendly conferences like those held with colonial representatives, he was afraid he could not vote for it. But before leaving this subject, he should like to impress upon the Government the desirability of including in future Colonial Conferences one or more representatives from India, as there were many questions considered at them, such, for instance, as the military and naval obligations appertaining to different parts of the Empire, with which India was deeply concerned, and in respect to which she should have proper representation.

The time occupied in the discussion of the Amendment curtailed the opportunity they had on a night like this of considering the important features embodied in the financial statement laid before the House by his right hon. friend, and he proposed to pass over some of them in as brief review as possible. It was gratifying to note that the large surpluses of the past six years had been continued during the year to which the statement referred, but really the most salient feature of the Budget was the application or use made of the surplus. The further reduction of the salt tax by 8 annas deserved special recognition as making another stride towards the entire abolition of it, which he had advocated in the past. Last year he dwelt at some length on the reasons which impelled him to suggest that the tax should finally disappear. It was a burden on the poorer classes of the people, which, besides being oppressive and injuriously affecting the consumption of a necessary article of food, had the more serious disadvantage of impressing upon them the notion that because they were under a foreign Government they were compelled to pay a tax from which they would otherwise be immune. It was worth while removing such an impression even at a great

financial sacrifice. He also welcomed the abolition of the famine cesses. These began to be levied in 1878, and in their incidence were equivalent to 2 per cent. on land revenue. They were gradually discontinued in certain provinces and now their total removal would, to his mind, benefit the cultivators as well as the landlords and tenants in the districts concerned. ✓ The grants of 35 lakhs of rupees for primary education, and 20 lakhs towards the development of agricultural instruction and experimental farms, and the establishment of a college, were pleasing signs of the recognition by the Government of India of the necessity of spreading education among the masses suitable to their needs, although it must be remarked that these contributions were but as drops in the ocean to what was needed. Another noticeable allocation of the surplus was the grant-in-aid afforded to district and local boards. All these contributions, together with the creation of a Department of Commerce and Industry, the establishment of a Railway Board, the extension of irrigation, and reorganisation of the police, were performances of the Government of India during the twelve months under review of which they had just reason to be proud. ✓

He could indicate, if time permitted, some other equally important matters to which that Government might devote its next surplus and earn in a larger degree the gratitude of the people, which he was glad to note had been accorded to them for their wise use of the spare funds of the past few years. But as one of the most pressing reforms which had been delayed on the plea of want of funds for a long time past, and which he believed called for adoption without longer delay, he would particularly mention that of the separation of the judicial from executive functions. He had dwelt at length on this topic in his speech a few years ago from these benches, and he should content himself now with remarking only that this reform had had acceptance and advocacy from many eminent men experienced in the administration of India. The combination of judicial and executive functions in the same officer must lead imperceptibly to

his being influenced in the discharge of his judicial duties in dealing with matters which he had had to deal with in his executive capacity, such, for example, as municipal offences. Even if this were not so, the popular mind was naturally imbued with the idea that this could not fail to be the case, and its confidence in the impartiality of judicial decisions was shaken. And as among the main titles of British rule to the confidence of the people in India was their belief in the impartial administration of justice under that rule, he should regard it as an act of wisdom on the part of the Secretary of State if he were to invite the Viceroy to give his early attention to the question of this reform.

When he was last in India, and indeed for a long time past, his attention had been drawn to the increasing tendency in local administrations to withhold appeals submitted over their executive decisions to superior authority by the parties concerned. In order to ascertain the accuracy of this allegation, he asked his right hon. friend recently to give a Return of the number of appeals and other representations forwarded to him from India, together with the number withheld. This Return was published yesterday, and from it he found that the allegation was well founded. It showed, in a steadily increasing ratio, a disposition in recent years to withhold these appeals in India, based upon discretion left to the local authorities under the rules governing the submission of appeals. This discretion was meant to be used sparingly, and only in respect of certain appeals which violated the rules. That the discretion was not wide, or meant to be wide, was fully apparent from this resolution of the Government of India, dated September 24th, 1880—

"The Governor-General in Council considers that the discretionary power of withholding petitions under Clause 8, Rule XIII. (since renumbered Clause 7, Rule XII.) of the rules for the submission, receipt, and transmission of memorials and other papers of the same class addressed to His Majesty the King, Emperor of India, or to the right hon. the Secretary of State for India, by private persons or by officers of all civil departments should be used with caution, and only after full consideration of the facts in each case. Having

regard to the constitution and character of the Indian subordinate services, dismissal of Government officials often involves serious distress, if not actual ruin, to them, and it is right that, under such circumstances, every opportunity should be allowed to them of making themselves heard. Further, when, as sometimes happens, their representations reach the Secretary of State through non-official channels, it is convenient that he should be in a position at once to deal with them, instead of being obliged, as may now be the case, to refer for information to this country. Such petitions, therefore, should not be withheld when there is any reasonable prospect of difference of opinion as to the order passed on them by the Government of India, or when they contain anything to which the attention of the Secretary of State is likely to be especially directed."

In spite of this injunction, it would appear from the Return that the discretionary power had been exercised within the past few years with increasing freedom. Ten years back, in 1894, of the petitions addressed to the Secretary of State, seventy-two were forwarded to him and forty-eight withheld. Since then every year the proportion of those forwarded became increasingly smaller, until, in the last year given in the Return, 1904, the numbers were twenty-three forwarded and 140 withheld. So that, whereas in 1894 the proportion of those sent was about two-thirds accepted to one-third rejected locally, ten years later it was one-sixth accepted and five-sixths rejected. This was a somewhat serious matter, and practically amounted to a denial of justice in many cases. The petitions were generally appeals against the acts and decisions of the very authorities with whom the discretion to withhold was left. He did not want to allege that they withheld these representations from any actual desire to prevent justice being done to the appellants. It was more likely that they were induced to hold them back on the ground that the interests involved in the appeals were trivial. They might be so to a high official, or even to one not concerned with the matter under appeal, but to the person appealing that same matter might be of vital importance. So long as the people were permitted to have the right of appeal—and it would be highly imprudent to curtail that right, so great

was their confidence in the decision of an appellate authority—they thought, and he believed rightly, that the tendency to withhold appeals in such largely increasing numbers was intended to take away in practice a valuable boon which had been accorded them in theory. He trusted he had demonstrated to his right hon. friend that this matter was worthy of his serious consideration, and hoped he would see the desirability of sending out instructions to India for a more sparing use of the discretion left to local Administrations with regard to the forwarding of appeals to higher authorities.

He asked the permission of the House to refer to a pleasant matter which had not been alluded to by any previous speaker, but which had aroused deep interest in India. To judge from the views expressed in many parts of the country, they might feel confident that a very hearty welcome would be extended to their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, during their forthcoming visit to the Indian dominions of His Majesty, a welcome as splendid and sincere as that which greeted King Edward VII. when, as Prince of Wales, he visited that land. He believed the Royal visit would tend further to draw the hearts of the people of India to the British throne. It would be wise to signalise that event by some gracious act which might appeal to the imagination of her princes and peoples, and therefore he was tempted to suggest to his right hon. friend that he should consider if he could not revive a project formulated by Lord Lytton at the Imperial Assemblage held at Delhi on the New Year's Day of 1877, where Her Majesty the late Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. In Lady Betty Balfour's work on Lord Lytton's Indian Administration there occurred a reference to this scheme in these words—

“Lord Lytton desired to take the opportunity to establish an Indian Privy Council, forming a distinct and separate institution, restricted, at all events in the first instance, to the great chiefs, and empowered to consult with and advise the Viceroy from time to time on general matters of State. Occasions might arise on which such sympathy and

counsel would be of extreme importance. . . . The opposition, however, of certain authorities at home proved too strong for the schemes to be carried out in the way the Viceroy had planned them, and they were finally reduced to an association of some of the leading native princes, with the principal advisers of the Indian Government as ‘Councillors of the Empress,’ thus forming a nucleus for a future Privy Council.”

The motive for the project was expounded by Lord Lytton in a letter to Lord Salisbury, dated May 11th, 1876, in which he said—

“Look at the mistake which Austria has made in the government of her Italian provinces. They were the best governed portions of Italy . . . Fearing the native *noblesse*, she snubbed and repressed it. . . . But the Indian chiefs and princes are not a mere *noblesse*. They are a powerful aristocracy. To secure completely, and efficiently utilise, the Indian aristocracy is, I am convinced, the most important problem now before us.”

If he recollected aright Lord Lytton not only enunciated the scheme, but actually appointed some chiefs as Imperial Councillors in 1877. Since then, however, nothing had been heard of it. He submitted that the forthcoming royal visit should be made the occasion for its revival. Among the new generation of native rulers that had come into existence since 1877, there were many well-educated, intelligent chiefs capable of giving advice to, and worthy to be taken into consultation by, the Viceroy on matters of State. Some such scheme as that conceived by Lord Lytton would give the Government of India an opportunity of securing the opinions of that class of men who, by the large stake they held in the safety and welfare of our Indian Empire, and by virtue of their representative and responsible positions, were clearly entitled to be taken into confidence and consultation by the paramount Power.

Copious reference had been made by previous speakers to that part of the proceedings of the meeting of the Legislative Council of the Viceroy where the Budget was discussed, which dealt with the attitude adopted by the Government of India in regard to our present fiscal controversy. In the course of their remarks

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some of his hon. friends expressed an apprehension that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham would, if it rested with him, force India, against her will, to join in any scheme of fiscal reform which was adopted by Great Britain. He could not share that apprehension, for he held in his hand a letter received from the right hon. Gentleman in reply to one he addressed to him in November, 1903, in which he distinctly said—

“I do not think under any circumstances that India could be forced to join unless there were general assent on the part of the Indian authorities.”

He considered that to be a full assurance on the part of the right hon. Gentleman that India would be left complete freedom to pursue her fiscal policy in such a way as suited best the promotion of her own economic and industrial interests, and he trusted no change of circumstances or modification of the words just quoted would be allowed to alter the spirit of that assurance.

He begged to be permitted at that stage to refer to the subject of the Motion which stood in his name, on the ground that for want of greater opportunities for the discussion of questions relating to India it had not had adequate consideration this session, and also because, as the Amendment now before the House would be divided upon, he was precluded from asking hon. Members to pronounce their definite decision thereupon. He was, however, convinced that there was not, nor could there possibly be, any division of opinion among hon. Members, whether they sat on his side or the other, as to the terms of the Motion or the object embodied in it. The Motion ran as follows—

“That this House regards with disapproval the degrading and harsh measures adopted in respect of His Majesty's Indian subjects in several of the British Colonies, notably in South Africa, considers them to be inconsistent with the reasonable claims of the people of India as subjects of the British Empire to fair treatment, and is of opinion that the Government of India should adopt every means within its power to protect the rights and interests of the people of India in all parts of the British

Dominions, and invoke the intervention of the Imperial Government to that end.”

The particulars which he had to lay before the House in support of this Motion shaped themselves into one long dismal tale of woe, and constituted a gross violation of some of the most solemn pledges given by the Crown to the people of India, as well as of promises and guarantees vouchsafed to them within recent times in several parts of Africa itself for fair treatment. As long back as 1843, a proclamation issued by Sir George Napier in view of the annexation of Natal contained this pledge—

“That there shall not be in the eye of the law any distinction or disqualification whatever founded on mere distinction of colour, origin, language, or creed, but that the protection of the law in letter and in substance shall be extended impartially to all alike.”

Under the Conventions of 1881 and 1884 with the Boer Government the rights and privileges secured for British residents in the Transvaal were understood to apply to British Indian residents, and, about ten years ago, when the South African Republic contended that that was not so, at the instance of the Colonial Office it was referred to the arbitration of the then Chief Justice of the Orange Free State. His finding was adverse to the case presented on behalf of the British Indians, whereupon the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham addressed a despatch to the High Commissioner, dated 4th September, 1895, in which he stated—

“In conclusion I would say that whilst desirous loyally to abide by the award, and to allow it to close the legal and international question in dispute between the two Governments, I reserve to myself the liberty later on to make friendly representations to the South African Republic as to the traders, and possibly to invite the Government to consider whether, when once its legal position has been made good, it would not be wise to review the situation from a new point of view and decide whether it would not be better in the interests of its own burghers to treat the Indians more generously, and to free itself from even the appearance of countenancing a trade jealousy which, I have some reason to believe, does not emanate from the governing class in the Republic.”

Then followed the war, justified by several misdeeds of the Boer Administration, among which its treatment of British Indian subjects was held up by Minister after Minister, and quite rightly, as one of the most revolting. Lord Lansdowne, then Secretary of State for War, speaking at Sheffield in November, 1899, uttered these memorable words—

“A considerable number of the Queen’s Indian subjects are to be found in the Transvaal, and among the many misdeeds of the South African Republic I do not know that any fills me with more indignation than its treatment of these Indians. And the harm is not confined to the sufferers on the spot; for what do you imagine would be the effect produced in India when these poor people return to their country to report to their friends that the Government of the Empress, so mighty and irresistible in India, with its population of 300,000,000, is powerless to secure redress at the hands of a small South African State?”

He could quote many other responsible utterances to show that the people of India were guaranteed fair treatment in South Africa as the result of the replacement of Boer by British rule, but what he had quoted amply proved that contention. After the war was over, and while British administration was being organised there, he repeatedly urged upon the Colonial Secretary to ameliorate the condition of British Indians by repealing the Boer regulations, and time after time promises were made that that should be done, that consultations with Lord Milner during his visit to this country would be held, and so forth. The first positive indication, however, that these expectations were futile was not long in coming, for in April, 1903, the local Transvaal authorities under Lord Milner issued a notification strictly enforcing the old Boer Location Law. This, be it remembered, was the same law against which our Colonial Office had protested so strongly to the Republic, and which in consequence had remained a dead letter. Next followed regulation after regulation the tendency of which was to make the *status* and condition of British Indians much inferior and worse under the new British regime than it was in Boer times. Old Dutch regulations, most of which were never enforced before, were dug up

and put into effect in their strictest sense. He had fully given them in detail in an appendix to a letter which he addressed to the Colonial Secretary at the end of 1903, giving a full narrative of the deplorable situation to which British Indians were reduced under British domination. That letter was forwarded to Lord Milner by his right hon. friend in a despatch which, he was pleased to say, was sympathetic. The replies, however, which that despatch evoked from Lord Milner and Sir Arthur Lawley, were most unsatisfactory, and, while indulging in vain regrets at the situation, substantially justified the hideous rigour of the treatment to which British Indians were subjected under their immediate administration, on the plea of the intense hostility of the so-called white population, and the necessity of protecting the new territories against the apprehended invasion of Indian traders. Instead of holding out any hope of alleviation, they asked permission for the legislation of more rigorous measures, but the Colonial Secretary discountenanced the demand to some extent, although not so completely as he could have wished or the justice of the case demanded. In one portion of his despatch of 20th July, 1904, he was actually driven to remind Lord Milner and Sir Arthur Lawley that—

“His Majesty’s Government hold that it is derogatory to national honour to impose on resident British subjects disabilities against which we have remonstrated, and to which even the law of the late South African Republic, rightly interpreted, did not subject them.”

At a meeting of the Legislative Council of the Transvaal held after the receipt of this despatch, Sir George Farrar moved a resolution—

“Urging on Mr. Lyttelton to appoint a Commission of influential persons in Great Britain to visit the country,” etc.

With the idea of securing an impartial consideration of the whole question. Believing fully in the strength and justice of the cause he had had the privilege of advocating on behalf of the 3,000,000 of their fellow-subjects in India, and in the full faith that a Commission composed of eminent Englishmen could not possibly go so far wrong as not to recognise the

legitimate demands of a considerable portion of British subjects for fair treatment, he addressed himself to the Colonial Secretary urging him to appoint such a Commission.

In reply to this he was informed that further communication from Lord Milner was awaited by the Colonial Secretary before coming to a final decision with regard to the appointment of the Commission. That was last October, and he had heard nothing more about it since. It seemed to have gone the way of many other references to the Transvaal Administration, and he was sorry not to see his right hon. friend in his place, as perhaps they might have known from him that night if he still intended to appoint the Commission. He had brought up to date in the merest outline the narrative of the failure of the Transvaal authorities to ameliorate the condition of British Indian residents within their jurisdiction, showing that, in spite of repeated pledges and promises to secure that object, they had, by various measures and regulations, reduced these people to a much worse plight than they were in during the Boer regime. Lord Milner's deliberate assurance that, at all events, those among them of a "superior class" would be exempted from the application of these disabling and degrading provisions, had not been fulfilled. He said in his letter of May 11th, 1903—

"It is the intention of the Government to be liberal in granting such exemptions. We have no wish to subject respectable British Indians, or civilised Asiatics generally, to any disabilities."

He would like to know in how many cases, and in respect of how many of the harsh measures, such exemption had been granted. This retrograde legislation, passed in a new colony when still under the immediate government of the Colonial Office, had, moreover, been the means of furnishing an incentive to the self-governing Colonies, such as Natal and the Cape, to reduce the already restricted rights and privileges enjoyed by the British-Indian residents there. In fact, everywhere in the overseas possessions of the Crown a relentless crusade was being carried on against

the very existence of British-Indian subjects resident there, and it was now high time the Imperial Government regarded this state of things as a matter of Imperial concern calling for drastic treatment. They could not but realise that Lord Milner had failed to bring about relations of amity and concord between two great outlying parts of the Empire, as he might have done by showing some firmness and discountenancing the "intense hostility" of the European residents in the Transvaal against British-Indian settlers. Even this "hostility" plea, so often put forward by him and his subordinates to cover their helplessness or unwillingness to grapple with the difficulty, was hardly tenable, for he was informed that the real opposition to Indians did not proceed from British colonists of the better class, but was mainly led by a low class of aliens, Polish Jews and such like, who were permitted rights and liberties denied to the Indian subjects of the Crown. This was fully borne out by the fact that a large number of respectable European firms in the Transvaal were so scandalised at the oppressive measures adopted against British Indians that they actually submitted a petition to the Lieutenant-Governor against the curtailment of their rights and liberties. In it they said—

"It is evident the Indian supplies a felt want because the general public support him."

They describe them as—

"an orderly, law-abiding, and useful section of the community, quite equal in honesty and sobriety to others who are not British subjects and yet enjoy full trading and other rights."

This most valuable testimony from a body of independent European gentlemen of position was a complete negation of the "hostility" excuse, and yet Sir Arthur Lawley, in his reply to his (Sir Mancherjee Bhownagree's) representation to the Colonial Secretary, explained it away by saying that the petitioners thus expressed themselves as they were in a position to ignore the competition of the Asiatic traders. That reply from top to bottom was one long untenable apology for the harsh treatment of the British Indian, and the strange arguments or special pleading on

which it was built up reached their culmination in this remarkable sentence—

“If the redemption of the pledges upon which Sir M. Bhownaggee depends both in letter and spirit means that in fifty or a hundred years this country will have fallen to the inheritance of the Eastern instead of Western populations, then from the point of view of civilisation they must be numbered among promises which it is a greater crime to keep than to break.”

The assumption about the country falling to the inheritance of Eastern nations was gratuitous, because nobody had urged such an absurd proposition or could believe in the possibility of it, and the “crime” of keeping solemn pledges of the Crown suggested here by a British pro-Consul sounded grotesque in juxtaposition to these words proclaimed by the good and great Queen Victoria in 1858—

“We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil.”

The fact of the matter was that the Transvaal Administration had deplorably failed in doing what they ought to have done to secure some amelioration of the condition of the British Indian since our rule was there established. On the other hand, it was only too evident from the tone and temper of Sir Arthur Lawley's letter that they had encouraged, passively at all events, some of the low classes of residents there in their hostility against, and jealousy of, British Indians. And thus the sympathetic promises of the late and present Secretaries for the Colonies and for India, for some reasonable solution of this difficult question, had remained unfulfilled. Lord Curzon, too, had well championed the cause of British Indians, but without avail. He knew if it rested with them they would not lose five minutes in putting an end to this intolerable state of things. But mere sympathy, after all, was not a substantial remedy for a grievance of this magnitude. The time had arrived for the Secretary of State and the Government of India to represent to the Cabinet that this most degrading and oppressive

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treatment of the people whose rights and liberties they were bound to protect in the colonial possessions of the Crown, must be regarded as a matter of Imperial concern and that a solution must be found at any cost. The plea of non-interference because of the self-governing Constitution of some of the Colonies might be convenient but was not convincing. Self-government carried with it privileges, responsibilities, and obligations to respect the pledges of that Imperial Power from which the right of self-government was derived. If and when the exercise of its authority deliberately ran counter to the generally accepted principles of the main Constitution, invalidated its solemn pledges, and trailed into dust its noblest traditions, it became the imperative duty of Ministers to advise the Crown to annul and to veto the measures which operated to such ignoble purposes. He submitted, therefore, that his right hon. friend should urge strongly upon the Prime Minister and his other colleagues to intervene with the colonial authorities to secure within their jurisdiction a recognition of the reasonable claims of the people of India to fair and honourable treatment. If the people in the Colonies could not be persuaded by conciliatory means to recognise this duty which they owed to the mother country, and were determined to strike at the very basis of the unity of the Empire by spurning the friendly advances and legitimate claims of millions of their fellow-subjects under the same flag, and thereby degrading them in the sight of other nations as unfit to enjoy the elementary rights and liberties of British citizenship, then he went to the length of saying that the Government of India should be called upon to adopt measures of retaliation. They had been talking loud and long about commercial reciprocity and retaliation. He asked with certainly much greater justification for reciprocity in the treatment of human beings. A kiss for a kiss, and a kick for a kick was, after all, a sound principle to go upon, and although any legislation by the Government of India against colonists might not have much practical operation, still in so far as the real sting of the colonial legislation against British Indians consisted in lowering them in the

sight of other peoples of the globe, let there be placed upon the Statute-book of our great Indian Empire corresponding measures which might show in turn that if colonials despise Indians, Indians hate colonials. He had to apologise to the House for engaging so much of its time, and thanked hon. Members for the extremely sympathetic hearing they had accorded to his feeble advocacy of a cause which affected the honour and interests of a vast number of their fellow-subjects. He had dealt with it not merely from the standpoint of India, but in its larger Imperial aspect, in the hope of cementing a deplorable breach between the peoples of the outlying parts of the British dominions, which, so long as it endured, made impossible that unity of the Empire which they all so fervently desired.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had made a powerful appeal for a cause in which he would find universal sympathy on that side of the House of Commons, but the latter part of his speech was a singular contrast to the earlier part in which he said he could not support the Amendment.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAG-
GREGG said if the intention of the Amendment was simply to bring under the consideration of the House and the Colonial Secretary such grievances as those to which he had referred he would support it, but when it was a matter of subjecting the Indian administration to periodic inquiries he could not.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the hon. Gentleman had talked about alleged grievances, and it seemed to him that that phrase tended to discount the real grievances which had been brought before the House. One part of the Resolution came down from the days of the late Professor Fawcett, who believed—as many of them still believed—that these periodic inquiries which used to be held, were essential to the proper treatment of Indian grievances; and that there was a closer touch in the past with

the Indian people under the old East India Company than in recent times. The main object of this Amendment was to give the people of India opportunities of placing their grievances freely before the House of Commons, and the latter part of the hon. Member's speech was the best proof of the necessity for the Amendment.

Optimistic utterances had never been more strongly marked than in the course of that debate. Prosperity had been the burden of almost every speech. But the fact that India was the only country in the world in which plague had become endemic discounted these statements about prosperity in India. Plague was a disease essentially caused by poverty, and it could only be removed by removing poverty. The prosperity was a prosperity of trade accounts. Those who, in the interests of the Empire, were opposed to preferential trade within the Empire could congratulate themselves on the Indian financial accounts. It was the unanimous opinion of the Government of India, as placed before them in these accounts, that the main cause of the prosperity of India in her financial accounts was her financial system, which was rootedly opposed to a system of preferential trade within the Empire. If there had been more frequent opportunities of bringing Indian questions before the House of Commons, would it have been possible for the Indian Government to have settled one of the most vexed and disputed questions—the financial control of the Indian military expenditure and the relations between the Commander-in-Chief and the Indian Minister of War, who was the Military Member of the Council—would it have been possible for the Government to have settled that question out of hand without consulting Parliament? Yet, without consulting Parliament, they had settled this question in a manner which, in the long run, could be no settlement at all. It was obviously a compromise to keep these two great men who were unable to agree, and whose disagreement had made the system unworkable. Under that system Lord Roberts and General Sir George Chesney managed to get on perfectly, and General Sir George Chesney brought that system before the

House, with the support of the present Secretary of State for War, as a model system for this country. The highest military authorities and almost everybody on both sides of the House agreed that that was a model system. Yet in a moment, because Lord Kitchener and the present Military Member of the Council did not agree, the whole system had been blown to the winds, and the Government had attempted to settle it (by a settlement which, he thought, was no settlement at all) behind the back of Parliament. That showed how incomplete was the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India.

MR. BRODRICK, who was indistinctly heard, was understood to say that that was rather a curious expression to use in view of the despatch which had been laid on the Table of the House.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said there was friction between the Commander-in-Chief in India and the Military Member of the Council, and the Government met the difficulty by a compromise, and that compromise was a new military system for India to which neither the House of Commons nor the House of Lords had had a word to say. That was what he called behind the back of Parliament.

There was another Question he would like to ask. How did we stand with regard to what was called Lord Kitchener's redistribution scheme? India was already convulsed by this redistribution scheme. All that had been done behind the back of Parliament and of the people of India. Nobody knew anything about it—even the Viceroy's Council did not know. There was a large expenditure of money in these accounts for carrying out the details of this redistribution scheme, the most curious item being a sum for the purchase of land for native troops along the scientific frontier of India in the new province. But they were fighting over the details of the scheme, and had not settled where all this money for land was to be spent. There were two kinds of questions which should be discussed here. The military expenditure had reached this year, not

£20,500,000, as the Secretary of State had said, but at least £21,000,000, the figure named by the Finance Minister. That enormous expenditure was largely swelled in the present year by the fact that the Government of India had deliberately adopted the policy of paying out of revenue the whole of the permanent charges which in this country would be put to debt charges. In India exactly the opposite principle in regard to debt charges was adopted from that in operation in this country. They were always told that India was a very poor country. Salt was taxed at from twelve to sixteen times its value, and the whole system of taxation told frightfully on the poorest people in the world. And yet we had always made India pay military charges which we could not afford here. We had been able to screw the people of India to the uttermost farthing for military charges, with the result, he admitted, of great military efficiency, but this principle was pushed rather far when, without the slightest consultation with this House, they had it laid down as a general policy that there were to be no loans for military purposes in India.

MR. BRODRICK asked where this policy was laid down.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE replied that it was laid down in the debate in the Legislative Council. It was argued by the Finance Member of the Council and by Lord Curzon himself. It was laid down that the purchase of land for Lord Kitchener's redistribution scheme was to be paid off in four years. There was, in the case of India, a great division in the conveyance of information to the House between the War Office and the Indian Government. Last year and the year before, the policy was announced, against which many of them protested, of throwing the whole of the charge of the rearmament of the artillery upon India for the first two years. He noticed with amazement, after all that was said about the pressing and instant necessity of this policy, that there was a shortage in the guns supplied to India. He had asked before Whitsuntide, and he had asked again that day, what the shortage was,

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and he got an Answer which was no Answer. And here they were, in a debate on India, without knowing what that shortage was. Another question which they had not been able to discuss in the House of Commons was the recent Mission to Afghanistan. There had been a debate in the House of Lords, however, which brought out the fact that the Mission pressed on behalf of India for all sorts of conditions which did not exist before, and which they did not succeed in obtaining. A whole series of speakers in the Lords pointed out conditions which Sir Louis Dane was asked to obtain.

MR. BRODRICK: What speakers?

***SIR CHARLES DILKE** asked would the Secretary of State deny that the Government in the two Answers given in the debate admitted that Sir Louis Dane had been unsuccessful in the results of his Mission—that was to say, that he had asked for a number of things which he did not obtain.

MR. BRODRICK: I entirely deny that the speakers on behalf of the Government in the House of Lords said that Sir Louis Dane had been unsuccessful in his Mission.

***SIR CHARLES DILKE** said their language was open for anyone to read, and it had been universally read in India as meaning what he had read it as meaning. Lord Ripon, in winding up the debate, put that construction upon it, and no reply was given to what he said. He had no doubt himself that Sir Louis Dane was directed by Lord Curzon to press on the Amir certain conditions which, as he himself thought, were unwise and dangerous conditions, and that happily those conditions were refused by the Amir.

MR. BRODRICK: If the right hon. Gentleman desires an Answer to be given he should state what the conditions were which Sir Louis Dane was told to press on the Amir and did not succeed in obtaining.

***SIR CHARLES DILKE** said he would give one class of conditions, which was suggested in the House of Lords debate; he meant railway facilities into Afghanistan for military purposes. That was a specific statement. It was made in the House of Lords, and it was not contradicted; on the contrary, the whole tone of the Answer went to show that it was a true statement. He gave this as another example of the class of questions which the House ought to have frequent and free opportunities of discussing. Another question was that which had been dealt with so ably by the last speaker—the treatment of British Indians in South Africa. The worst sufferers were the Indians in Natal, whose treatment was peculiarly mean in view of their great services in the war. A hundred British Indians had subscribed a large sum, and had obtained the services of the thousand British Indians who acted as bearers throughout the war and performed magnificent service, especially at Spion Kop. That added to the peculiar meanness with which these British subjects were treated in Natal and the Transvaal. A further question which ought to be discussed was the position of India in relation to the fiscal question and the Imperial Conference. His right hon. friend had read out the declaration of Lord Curzon in which occurred the words “those would be the instructions with which our delegates would proceed.” In view of that declaration, what became of the free and unfettered conference? Surely this was a question which should be probed to the bottom in the House of Commons. The Indian Government had emphatically declared against preference, and the people of the United Kingdom seemed to be of the same opinion. Therefore the only part of the British Empire which substantially contributed towards the defences of the Empire and which this year had contributed over £21,000,000 towards the support of the forces of this country was the Indian Empire, and it had declared itself unanimously against Imperial preference. How, then, could a conference on the question be free and unfettered when this country and the only other part of the Empire that contributed fully to the maintenance of

the Imperial forces were rootedly opposed to the idea of preference? In such circumstances it was a delusion and dangerous to the fabric of the Empire to tempt the great self-governing Colonies into a conference on the question. The whole idea was blown into the air.

SIR J. FERGUSSON said he differed from the right hon. Baronet opposite as to the object and the effect of this Amendment. The speech of the right hon. Baronet had been mainly directed to matters which had come up in the debate, and he had dealt with them very ably. One thing which the right hon. Baronet had laid stress upon was a charge that the Government of India had taken upon itself to settle very important matters behind the back of Parliament. He thought it would be a great mistake to lower in any way the position of the Commander-in-Chief in India. It was a position that commanded the highest respect with the Native Army. The work of that officer was very heavy indeed, and he could understand that it had been contemplated to appoint a Chief of the Staff who would relieve the Commander-in-Chief of a great deal of his executive duty in regard to discipline and distribution of troops. The system had worked well in South Africa, where Lord Kitchener himself had acted as Chief of the Staff. He did not think that those Members of the House who had been soldiers would have much difficulty in understanding how that scheme would work. The right hon. Gentleman said that under a former military system there had been no such trouble even with the present distribution. The House was aware of the case of Sir Charles Napier, who resigned the position of Commander-in-Chief because he was not allowed a sufficiently free hand in the management of the Army. The right hon. Gentleman had complained that money had been paid for the purchase of land for military purposes and that they were not told where the land was. That was not an uncommon thing to do in this country. Frequently a Vote was taken for certain portions of land.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he did not complain of all, because he was

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rather in favour of the system. What he said was that this question had been settled in one sense in India and in exactly the opposite sense in this country at the same time.

SIR J. FERGUSSON said that in spite of a large reduction in taxation India had been so blessed with prosperity of late years that the Government had been able to carry out very important reforms. He wished to point out that the Post Office carried out works out of revenue which in other departments would be charged to capital and would be raised by loan. He had listened with great pleasure to the speech of his hon. friend the Member for Bethnal Green, who had spoken with such force and so well for his fellow-countrymen in India. The hon. Member knew so well how to put the matter in the most forcible manner, and with good taste, and he hoped what he had said would have a permanent effect upon the Government, and that the House would not tolerate such treatment being accorded to our own fellow-subjects any longer.

He thought that they had in many respects strayed from the precise terms of the Amendment. He did not think, moreover, that the arguments of the mover and seconder of the Amendment established a case showing the beneficial effects which would flow from frequent Parliamentary debates in relation to the government of India. It would be most dangerous if the House put pressure on the Government of India in relation to policy on grounds which revealed little knowledge of the real circumstances of the country. In opposition to the statements of the mover of the Amendment, he maintained that the methods of government in India were most sympathetic to the native population. In no country in the world were the governing classes so much brought in contact with the people, the vast majority of the Civil Service being natives, though, of course, as long as England governed India the higher offices must be kept in British hands. It was altogether untrue to say that the natives were not admitted to a fair share of the

appointments in the Civil Service, and the most rudimentary acquaintance with the Government of India would show that such a charge was totally without foundation. He should be glad, however, if the Government could see their way to enter upon a more liberal and less restricted expenditure in regard to railways, because railways had been the salvation of India. Before any of these railways were made, the cost of carriage of the valuable produce of India on the backs of animals to the seaport was so great that as soon as the railways were made even the highest railway rates charged enabled the produce to be brought to market at a reduction of 50 per cent. upon the former carriage. With regard to the great difference in the manufacturers' prices and the prices at which articles were purchased by the people, hon. Members should not forget how great a part was played in this transaction by the cost of carriage. When salt had to be carried hundreds of miles on the backs of animals naturally its cost must be greatly increased to the consumer. Railways and roads were now being made in order to cheapen the cost of salt to the people. The making of branch railways and roads would have the same effect upon India as they had had in France, for they would increase the prosperity of the country and still further increase the revenue.

*MR. BRODRICK said he thought it would be generally agreed that there was no ground for the Amendment before the House, despite the efforts that had been made by some of its supporters to give a depressing look to things in India which really were the most cheerful aspect. The demand for periodical inquiries was really an invitation to go back to what, in the case of India, were the dark ages. The last instance of such an inquiry was in 1833, but one hon. Member had delighted the House by carrying us back to the advantages gained by the inquiry in 1813 under totally different conditions. It was also asked that greater opportunities should be given for the Parliamentary discussion of Indian affairs. It was not desirable that the House should interfere in details with the Government of India. Questions of principle, such as he had brought

forward that day, might very properly be made the subject of criticism, but the main government of India must be conducted in India; and, indeed, it was to the infrequency of Parliamentary discussion of Indian affairs which must be attributed the fact that the government of India was conducted with so little Party conflict, to the great advantage of the country. But there was no real lack of opportunity for the discussion of Indian questions. The question of the treatment of Indian natives in the Transvaal might have been raised on the salary of the Colonial Secretary. As for the fiscal question, that question had been discussed six or eight times during the present session, and he remembered only the barest incidental reference having been made to the case of India.

His noble friend the Member for Ealing was kind enough to say that there was very little difference between the views of the late and the present Secretary of State with regard to the fiscal question as it affected India. If he were to ask his noble friend to educate the people of this country up to the standard of conduct which ruled the Indian Government in fiscal matters he would be said to be playing into the hands of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham. Why? Because, first, the Indian Government had a free hand in fiscal matters which was not the case in this country, or at all events we had not been in the habit of using it; and secondly, they had a general revenue tariff, which was the bugbear of hon. Members opposite. They had exactly that freedom for which the Prime Minister contended, no more and no less. All he could say was that the general tribute which had been paid to the Indian tariff position of the Indian Government to-day, and the evident desire of his noble friend the Member for Ealing that they should all go into the same lobby in support of that position, was one of the most salutary symptoms he had seen in the course of the long discussions during the last two years, and showed the absolute correctness of the position taken up by the Prime Minister on this subject.

He regretted that the lateness of the hour precluded him from dealing in detail

with the various suggestions which had been made. With regard to the attempt of the hon. Member for Flint to show that the people of India were in a position of destitution, ignorance, and starvation, that had been admirably dealt with by his hon. and gallant friend the Member for Stepney, who, speaking from his Indian experience, showed conclusively that the observations of the hon. Member for Flint were of a partial character. He did not propose to follow that argument, but he should like to say a word with regard to the proposal to place the salary of the Secretary of State on the Estimates. Personally he had not the slightest objection to that, for, having had experience of that ordeal in a less peaceful atmosphere, he had ceased to dread it. But, at the same time, he deprecated it as a Member of Parliament, and particularly as the Member specially responsible for the affairs of India. The salutary and hitherto generally accepted position taken up in respect of the affairs of India was that they should be kept out of the domain of Party politics. That, however, would be absolutely impossible if they put the Secretary of State's salary on the Estimates, for that salary would then be made the subject of Party attack. It was so continually in regard to every other office, and it would become so undoubtedly in regard to India. He had done what he could to give an opportunity for the discussion of Indian subjects this year by inducing his right hon. friend the Prime Minister to give an earlier day, and if there were ever a prominent Indian subject which had escaped the notice of Parliament, he should be among the foremost Members to press that a special opportunity should be provided for its discussion. But he honestly confessed he was driven back, and not forward, by the picture drawn by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, whose evident desire it was to bring every administrative question in India under the notice of Parliament and to secure for it previous discussion in the House of Commons. That seemed to him an extremely vicious interpretation of the system of government which had hitherto prevailed, and had enabled them to put forward so excellent a picture of the finances of India.

Mr. Brodrick.

He regretted, too, that the right hon. Member should have displayed less than his usual candour and accuracy in the statements he made in respect of the opinions of the Government of India, and also of the recent negotiations with Afghanistan. With regard to the former, he asked the right hon. Baronet on what ground he complained that an injustice had been done to the Indian taxpayer by its being laid down that money should not be borrowed for military works.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE denied that he said it was an injustice to the taxpayer. On the contrary, he was favourable to the system. What he complained of was that one system was adopted in India and exactly the opposite here, and they were defended on opposite grounds.

*MR. BRODRICK pointed out that it was by no means laid down as a policy by the Finance Minister; it was simply stated not to be necessary to borrow at the present moment, but if necessity arose he would do so. With regard to Afghanistan, the right hon. Gentleman had made some very startling statements. It was not the case that the negotiations had resulted in failure. As stated by Lord Lansdowne, the main objects of our negotiations with the Amir of Afghanistan were, first, to renew the agreements entered into with the late Amir, and, secondly, to have friendly negotiations with him with regard to a number of subsidiary points. The first object was achieved by an agreement that covered all the engagements entered into by the Amir Abdurrahman. We also arrived at a thoroughly friendly understanding with the Amir on a number of subsidiary points. He thought the Amir understood our point of view and that we understood his. The Government had every reason to be satisfied with the conduct of the negotiations by Sir Louis Dane and also with the attitude assumed by the Amir on these various questions at the close.

He would not trouble the House by giving more than a general Answer to the criticisms which had been made with regard to the treatment of Indians in

South Africa. He fully realised that it was the duty, as it was the desire, of the Government to secure for British-Indian subjects in any British colony the fullest opportunities they could for peaceful employment in their various trades and professions. On the other hand, it was perfectly well known that the peculiarities of climate which preserved us in this country from the competition of an unlimited number of Asiatics did not exist in some of our Colonies. There was a good deal of objection to that competition in some Colonies, and his Majesty's Government had not the power to compel our self-governing Colonies to admit their Indian fellow-subjects to the same advantages as they enjoyed themselves. The Government could only bring to bear the greatest pressure in their power, and they exercised their influence wherever they could. He believed the time would come when the objection to Indian labour would not be so strongly felt in South Africa as it was now, and that it would then be possible to insist upon proper terms. In the meantime we must exercise patience. He trusted that as a definite Motion had been submitted to the House they would be permitted to take a division on it before the sitting closed.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) contended that this country already possessed the same freedom that India enjoyed, and with the leave of Parliament could retaliate if it desired to do so. He reminded the House, however, that the Government of India had issued a Blue-book carefully analysing what the effect of retaliation would be upon the Indian Empire if they adopted the principle of colonial preference. That Blue-book went through country by country, and showed that India had much to lose and little to gain by any attempt at retaliation. The Prime Minister, on the other hand, was pretending in regard to this country, that he could do much by retaliation. If the Board of Trade would only present a similar Blue-book, showing how much this country would lose by adopting a plan of retaliation, it would do an inestimable service both to the House and to the country. Instead of getting the

Board of Trade to do that, the Prime Minister was attempting to make the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham think, and was also inducing the whole country to think, that he was really in favour of protection. The Secretary of State had not at all met the case put by the right hon. Baronet with reference to a Colonial Conference. India had debarred herself from taking part in a free and unfettered conference. Would the Prime Minister make a similar declaration with regard to this country?

As to the actual Amendment before the House, its wording was undoubtedly open to criticism, but its general spirit being that we should discuss Indian questions more fully, and pay more deference to Indian opinion, he should vote for it. Considerable difference of opinion had been expressed as to the prosperity of India, but the statements were not so irreconcilable as they might at first sight appear. Members on the one side were talking rather of the poverty of India as compared with other countries, while the Secretary of State and his supporters were speaking of the comparative prosperity of India in her national finances. India was unquestionably prosperous in the latter respect. In this country the national finances were much worse than they appeared, inasmuch as we pretended to be paying off debt by the Sinking Fund, whereas, in reality, we were doing nothing of the kind. But in India, during the last seven years, there had been a surplus of £21,000,000, largely used in reproductive work. In addition, £8,000,000 profit, not shown in the accounts, had gone to the gold reserve fund. In the year 1904-5 a surplus of £3,500,000 was anticipated; £1,137,000 extra was paid for Army services; a crore of rupees or £67,000 was given to the Presidencies of Bombay and the Punjab in connection with settlement, and there was a profit of £1,750,000 on the coinage. Therefore, if the Estimates had been adhered to there would have been a surplus of £7,000,000, or one-third of the total taxation. He believed, however, that these enormous surpluses were a danger to the Indian people, inasmuch as they tended to extravagance. During the last twenty years much extra taxation had been levied and had not yet

been removed. The salt tax was certainly lighter, but a whole series of import duties levied ten years ago had not yet been removed, and he thought the time had come when an effort should be made to secure their removal, which would be a real step in the direction of free trade. The revenue in past Budgets had been purposely under-estimated. He was glad to see that this year there was a much less under-estimate, as it was not right that the people of a country like India, already so heavily taxed in proportion to their wealth, should be asked to pay more than was necessary, and to provide large surpluses which tended to extravagance and to unnecessary military expenditure.

*MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire) said the policy of India had been largely in the direction of fiscal reform, and much of her prosperity was due to the fiscal reforms which had been carried out in that country, especially in connection with the Currency Act of 1897, the principal features of which were the abolition of the free dumping of silver in the mints and the establishment of a gold standard. Then in 1895, in connection with the cotton duties, countervailing excise duties were imposed for the purpose of giving a fair field and no favour to products principally from Lancashire, and the Lancashire Members without exception supported the proposal. But in 1899, when a similar proposal was put forward in connection with the production of sugar in India, many of those same

Members on the Liberal side opposed the policy, which, when it was for the encouragement of their own manufactures, they supported, as being in their opinion contrary to free trade. The fiscal policy of India afforded a good example, and he concurred in the view of the Secretary of State that it was a similar power that the Prime Minister was seeking for this country. While fully agreeing with the admiration which had been expressed for the railway system of India, he would point out that since 1878 the policy of the Indian Government had been to encourage the railway system and starve the irrigation works. It was true there was an improvement to the extent of 50 per cent. in the present Budget, but it was really a miserable addition, seeing that the amount expended on railways up to March 31st, 1903, was £196,000,000, whereas only £26,000,000 had been spent on major irrigation works, while even in the present Budget over £9,000,000 was being devoted to railway purposes against £2,000,000 for irrigation works. He regretted that time would not permit of his going into the subject; he would merely say that if more opportunity was allowed by the Government of India for private capital to enter in connection with all kinds of useful works it would be better for the country.

Question put.

The House divided. Ayes, 116; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 202.)

AYES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harwood-
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brassey, Albert
Brockdrick, Rt. Hn. St. John

Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Egerton, Hn. A. de Tatton

Fellowes, Rt. Hn. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manch'r.
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inverness B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, H. D. (Shrewsbury)
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Marq of (L'nd'nderry
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)
Henderson, Sir A. (Stafford, W.
Hermion-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside)

Mr. Emmott.

Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
 Jessel, Captain Herb. Merton
 Keswick, William
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol)
 Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
 Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
 Macdona, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Milvain, Thomas
 Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants.)
 Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
 Morrell, George Herbert

Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mount, William Arthur
 Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Nicholson, William Graham
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Pretymian, Ernest George
 Purvis, Robert
 Randles, John S.
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herb. (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
 Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford

Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, H. C. (North'mb. Tyneside)
 Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Spear, John Ward
 Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lanes)
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Turnour, Viscount
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
 Warde, Colonel C. E.
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wylie, Alexander
 Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
 Alexander Acland - Hood
 and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
 Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Allen, Charles P.
 Bell, Richard
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Bright, Allan Heywood
 Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, N. E. (York, N.R., Whitby)
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Cremer, William Randal
 Delany, William
 Dilké, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
 Dobbie, Joseph
 Doogan, P. C.
 Duncan, J. Hastings
 Ellice, Capt. E. C. (Sandwich's Bghs)
 Emmott, Alfred
 Eve, Harry Trelawney
 Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N. E.)
 Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)

Helme, Norval Watson
 Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
 Higham, John Sharp
 Holland, Sir William Henry
 Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
 Jones, Leif (Appleby)
 Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
 Lamont, Norman
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Levy, Maurice
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Lough, Thomas
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Crae, George
 Markham, Arthur Basil
 Nannetti, Joseph P.
 O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)

Schwann, Charles E.
 Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
 Shackleton, David James
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Slack, John Bamford
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Sullivan, Donal
 Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Tomkinson, James
 Toulmin, George
 Villiers, Ernest Amherst
 Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
 White, Luke (York, E.R.)
 Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
 Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
 Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr.
 Cathcart Wason and Mr.
 Herbert Roberts.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Considered in Committee :—

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it appears from the Accounts presented to Parliament that in 1903-4 the Revenue of India amounted to £83,756,155, the Expenditure charged against Revenue to £80,759,755, and the Capital Expenditure not charged to

Revenue to £5,043,003.—(Mr. Secretary Brodrick.)

Resolution to be reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That this House do now adjourn."
 —(Sir Acland-Hood.)

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) said
 he desired to ask a Question of which

he had given private notice to the Prime Minister and the legal advisers of the Crown—who, however, had not thought fit to be present to reply—name'y, whether the Commission which was proposed to inquire into the stores scandal in South Africa could or could not compel the attendance of witnesses, and could or could not compel the production of documents. From inquiries he had made he believed it could not do either. If that were so, the result of such a Royal Commission must be, to speak quite frankly, under the circumstances, a farce. It could do nothing but throw dust in the eyes of the public. He did not say it was intended to do so, but that must be its effect. What would be the effect on the guilty parties—some of them, perhaps, officers and some of them contractors? The Royal Commission could compel officers to attend as witnesses or to produce documents, because if they refused they could be cashiered, but the other parties referred to in Sir William Butler's Report could, and probably would, snap their fingers at the Royal Commission. His Majesty's Government must have known that that was the state of the law, and no worse tribunal could be found for investigating the matter. The Parnell Commission was a statutory Commission, and it was set up in order to be able to compel the attendance of witnesses, to have the authority of one of His Majesty's Judges, to have power to commit for contempt, and presumably to have power to punish for perjury. None of these things would be possible to the Royal Commission now proposed. Was it to be supposed that these contractors and others would obey a summons without any authority behind it? The result would probably be that those who had been foolish would

Major Seely.

suffer, while all the knaves escaped. The Government had acted either with the intention of deceiving the House, or without due consideration of the course they had proposed, and he respectfully asked that some information should be given to the House before a final decision was taken on the matter.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) urged that some Answer should be given, although the Prime Minister was not present. It used to be the custom for the Prime Minister to attend the adjournment of the House in order that he might answer Questions on important public business, and the House was certainly entitled to some measure of respect.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Welling-ton), in reply, said that he merely waited to see if any other Members desired to ask Questions. He would certainly place the subject before the Prime Minister, but he assured the hon. Member that there was no desire on the part of the Government to deceive the House or the country. He suggested that the Questions should be deferred until Question time.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) hoped the Patronage Secretary would convey to the Prime Minister the strong feeling of the House that the proposed Royal Commission would be wholly inadequate for the purpose, and also as to the necessity of the Prime Minister's being in his place on such an occasion.

Adjourned at twenty-two minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 22nd June, 1905.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Southport, Birkdale, and West Lancashire Water Board Bill [Lords]; Formby Township Bill [Lords]; Blackpool Improvement Bill [Lords]; Littlehampton Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Electric Supply Company (Acton District) Bill [Lords]; Matlock Bath Improvement Bill [Lords]; Llandrindod Wells Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have not been complied with, viz.:—Administrative County of London and District Electric Power Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered; That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills That, in the

case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Pier and Harbour Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill.

Ordered; That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills; originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [Lords]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time to-morrow.

CHURCHES (SCOTLAND) BILL (NO STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred pursuant to the Order of the House of the 7th day of June, no Standing Orders are applicable, viz.:—Churches (Scotland) Bill.

Great Northern Railway (Ireland) Bill (changed from "Great Northern (Ireland) and Midland Railways Bill"). As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

DONOVAN'S DIVORCE BILL [LORDS].

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House copies of the Minutes of Evidence and Proceedings, together with the documents deposited in the case of Donovan's Divorce Bill [Lords].—(Mr. Attorney-General.)

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Select Committee on Divorce Bills, that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses for Donovan's Divorce Bill [Lords], and also that they do hear Counsel and examine Witnesses against the Bill, if the parties concerned think fit to be heard by Counsel and produce Witnesses.—(*Mr. Attorney-General.*)

PETITIONS.

JUVENILE SMOKING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return [presented June 20th] to be printed. [No. 203.]

MINT.

Copy presented, of Thirty-fifth Annual Report of the Deputy Master and Comptroller of the Mint, 1904 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAYS ABANDONMENT.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Hastings Tramways Bill [Lords], and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158b]; referred to the Committee on the Bill.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3414 and 3415 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

The Dissolution of the Union between Norway and Sweden.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government have received any communications

from Norway or Sweden regarding the constitutional question which has arisen between King Oscar and the Norwegian Storting; and, if so, whether such communications, or the substance or purport of them, can be laid before Parliament.

(*Answered by Earl Percy.*) A copy of the King of Sweden's Address to the Storting has been communicated to His Majesty's Government. His Majesty's Consul-General at Christiania has been furnished unofficially with copies of documents relating to the Storting's Declaration of Dissolution of the Union.

Memorial of Officers of Dublin and Queens-town Travelling Post Office.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if a memorial had been received in October last from certain sorting clerks and telegraphists employed on Dublin and Queenstown T. P. O. asking for increased trippage allowance; and could he say when a decision would be communicated to them.

(*Answered by Lord Stanley.*) The memorial to which the hon. Member refers has been received. I am not as yet prepared to reply to it, but I hope to be shortly in a position to do so.

Site for Statue of late Duke of Cambridge.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): To ask the hon. Member for Chorley, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, on what spot in the Horse Guards Parade it is intended to erect the statue of the Duke of Cambridge.

(*Answered by Lord Balcarres.*) There is a proposal to erect a statue in memory of the late Duke of Cambridge in the neighbourhood of the Horse Guards, but as yet no site has been selected, and it has not been suggested that it should be erected upon the Horse Guards Parade.

Alleged Caning of Children in Preston for Non-Payment of School Fees.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education what is the result of the inquiry made by the Board of

Education into the alleged caning of children in the public elementary schools at Preston because their parents did not pay school fees; whether school fees are charged in the Preston schools with the sanction of the Board of Education; and, if so, on what specific ground such sanction has been given.

(Answered by Sir William Anson.) I have made inquiries, and I find that on three occasions a councillor has called the attention of the council to alleged cases of caning for non-payment of fees. As a result of careful investigation the education committee came practically unanimously to the conclusion that there was no foundation for the charge in the first set of cases. In the second set it was found that all the children had been in occupation of recognised free places for more than twelve months. The third set are still under investigation. In all the schools except one, where fees are charged, the right to do so is based upon Section 2 (2) of the Act of 1891, and no sanction of the Board is required. In the remaining case the fees were sanctioned by the Board under Section 4 (1) of the Act of 1891.

Escape from Fire Committee—London Building Acts Amendment Bill and the City of London (Escape from Fire) Bill.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in view of the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire as to the provision of means of escape from fire in factories, workshops, laundries, offices, shops, hotels, and other buildings where persons work or live in large numbers, and to report what changes in the law are necessary, he proposes to take any action in regard to the consideration by a Select Committee of the now pending London Building Acts Amendment Bill and the City of London (Escape from Fire) Bill.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.) Some two years ago I suggested to the London County Council that they should amend the provisions of the London Building Act in respect to the means of escape from fire; and it was not my intention or wish, in assenting to the request of the hon. Member for

Berwick for a general inquiry into the subject, that such an inquiry should interfere with the consideration of the proposals that have been made for London, which stands on a somewhat different footing from the rest of the country, and has a more urgent need for legislation.

Annual Leave of Abstractor Clerks.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Treasury Letter of the 8th May, granting eighteen days annual leave to abstractors of the new class after ten years' service applies to abstractors of the old class; and, if so, whether he will take steps to have this concession communicated to those departments where abstractors of the old class have hitherto been given only fourteen days.

(Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.) The concession referred to by my hon. friend is applicable in the case of abstractors of the old class, and heads of departments have been so informed.

Sentence of Imprisonment on the Chaukidar Mahabir.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that Mr. Burkitt, officiating Judge at Allahabad, recently passed a sentence of six years rigorous imprisonment on the Chaukidar Mahabir for the theft of letters the property of the Post Office; and, having regard to the fact that less severe punishment is inflicted for similar offences in this country, will he suggest the expediency of a reconsideration of the case with a view to a remission of part of the sentence.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.) I have observed a report of the case referred to in the newspapers. The accused appears to have committed an extensive series of thefts and to have stolen considerable sums of money contained in the intercepted letters. It is open to him to appeal to the High Court and the Governments of the United Provinces and India in regard to the severity of the sentence, and I see no reason to interfere,

Permanent Appointment of a Third Judge for the Province of Oudh.

MR. WEIR : To ask the Secretary of State for India if the Government of India will consider the expediency of making the appointment of a third Judge for the province of Oudh permanent instead of merely temporary.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.)

I agreed in April last, on the recommendation of the Government of India, to the third Judge in the Chief Appellate Court in Oudh being made permanent.

Allen's Hill School, County Armagh.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) : To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Board of National Education, at their meeting on the 26th May, 1903, at which the Resident Commissioner was not present, unanimously resolved to grant aid to Allen's Hill School, county Armagh, and that the secretaries of the Board, contrary to the usual practice, failed to notify this decision to the applicants; and will he explain why this resolution was afterwards, at a meeting of the Board at which the Resident Commissioner was present, rescinded.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The Commissioners at their meeting on the 26th May, 1903, decided to grant aid to this school, but, as there were peculiar circumstances in the case, at their next meeting on the 8th June following, they requested the Resident Commissioner to visit the locality of Allen's Hill, and, in view of the number of small schools in that locality, to report on the best arrangement of the schools. The Commissioners ordered that in the meantime the action of the Board on the 26th May was to be suspended and no intimation of the grant of that date was to be sent to the applicant. On the 15th December, 1903, the case was again before the Commissioners, and in view of the unsuitable nature of the schoolhouse premises and of the fact that there was no real necessity for the school, the locality being already overstocked with small schools, the order granting aid was rescinded.

MR. SLOAN : To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a school was established at Allen's Hill, county Armagh, in the year 1899, by the Rev. David McLaughlin, to meet the wants of that district; that, on 31st December, 1899, application was made to the National Board for aid, on the grounds that there were sixty-two pupils on the roll, thirty-eight of whom never attended any other school; that nearly all the sixty-two pupils were resident over two miles from any existing school, a statutory declaration to that effect having been lodged with the Board; and if he can say why the application for aid was refused in this case.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) An application for aid to this school was received on the 30th December, 1899. The average daily attendance was given as twenty-nine. The inspector in his report on the application stated that there were only forty-two pupils on the rolls and about thirty-one in average attendance, and of the forty-two on rolls eighteen had been withdrawn from neighbouring national schools. The reasons for refusing aid are given in Answer to the preceding Question.

MR. SLOAN : To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the fact that a new school building had been erected in 1900 at Allen's Hill, county Armagh, was reported to the National Board with an offer to make any reasonable alterations or improvements suggested by their inspector; and that an application for aid was made and supported by two memorials and afterwards verified by statutory declaration; and whether, in view of the fact that in February, 1901, the Resident Commissioner informed the applicant that if he could show by memorial or otherwise that there were thirty children residing in the district and two miles from any existing school his claim would receive favourable consideration, and that a memorial from the parents of forty-eight children resident at the distance named by the Resident Commissioner was presented to the Board, he

can say why the Board refused aid in this case.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The facts are substantially as stated, save that there is no record of any such promise as that alleged to have been given by the Resident Commissioner, nor could such a promise be given without the consent of the Board. Aid was refused for the reasons stated in reply to the two previous Questions.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

H.M.S. "Emerald."

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will say whether H.M.S. "Emerald," training ship in Cork Harbour, has been condemned.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): No, Sir.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Then is there no intention of removing this ship from Cork Harbour?

MR. PRETYMAN: No, Sir.

South African War Stores—Fortnightly Reports.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War why were the fortnightly reports of the stocks of goods held in South Africa discontinued at the 31st of December, 1902; did any cargoes of war stores arrive after the 1st of January, 1903; and were the large stocks which had then accumulated all sold locally, at some such scales of prices as those obtained for forage, and described in the Butler Report.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): These fortnightly reports were telegraphed reports, which originated during the war for the guidance of the War Office in the maintenance of the supplies required by the troops in the field. In view of the cost of these cablegrams, and as similar information was also

given in a monthly state of supplies rendered by mail, the telegraphed reports were considered no longer necessary and were dispensed with on March 18th, 1903. The monthly states were continued. No cargoes of war supplies, so far as is known at the War Office, arrived in South Africa after the 1st January, 1903. As regards the last part of the Question the reply is in the negative. These stocks were disposed of, some at prices approved by the War Office, others at prices approved locally; some were sent to England for disposal, some were condemned as bad, and some still remain.

MR. LOUGH: Will the right hon. Gentleman publish these monthly reports which go on after the fortnightly reports?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think I ought not to undertake to publish isolated War Office Papers. All these statements as they are required for the purposes of the inquiry will be produced.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): Did the monthly states disclose the names of the buyers of the stocks in South Africa and the prices?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The prices, yes. One set of reports did disclose the names. The others not.

Cost of Sold Stores.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what was the actual or approximate cost in the first instance of those stores which Lord Kitchener valued at from £6,000,000 to £7,000,000 when he left South Africa; what has been the actual or approximate sum realised by subsequent sales; what has been the estimated value of these stores actually consumed by the Army left in occupation; whether any of these stores still remain in stock; and, if so, what is the estimated value of the same.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The War Office is not in possession of any detail of the stores on which the estimate made by Lord Kitchener—admittedly a rough

one—was based. A total sum of approximately £8,000,000 was realised by the sale of various stock in South Africa from April, 1902, to September, 1904, but the monies arising from the sale of ordinary supplies to soldiers, captured stock, etc., are included in this total and cannot be separated. As regards the other points raised in the Question the information desired by the hon. Member would require considerable labour to obtain in consequence of the difficulty of differentiating between the stores actually consumed and those of a similar description which arrived at a later date.

MR. J. A. PEASE: May I ask whether it is not the fact that strict ledger accounts were kept of all these transactions in accordance with Lord Kitchener's recommendation when he left South Africa; and also whether the suggestion made by Mr. Edwards to Sir Neville Lyttelton that there was a wastage of between £2,000,000 and £3,000,000 of our money is correct?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I really would prefer not to answer these supplementary Questions off hand. They refer to matters of which I have no personal cognisance whatever. I do not wish to make any mistakes.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Was the sum of £8,000,000, of which the right hon. Gentleman just spoke, the sum of money roughly stated at £7,000,000, I think, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer led us to suppose he would get back and did not?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir. I think not; I think it would include a portion of it; but the two sums are not identical.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): That sum would include the stores sold, but never removed, and then bought back again?

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, Sir. The losses on those stores are allowed for.

The War Office and Colonel Morgan's Libel Actions.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the fact that Colonel Morgan's solicitors have threatened a libel action against the *Daily News* for commenting on the Report of Sir William Butler's Committee; and whether, in the event of actions being entered against that or any other newspaper, the War Office will give access to the documents necessary for the defence.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I am not at present prepared to discuss the probable attitude of the War Office in the event of a civil action being commenced.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): Was the Secretary of State cognisant of the fact that Colonel Morgan proposed to bring this action against the *Daily News* before his solicitors communicated with the paper?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir, I was not.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether any application was made by *The Times* newspaper to obtain documents for the defence of *The Times'* action; was any similar application made by the *Daily News*; and, if so, what answer was given?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Yes, Sir, an application was made, and they were informed that all documents which were at the disposal of the plaintiff were at their disposal also, and were open to their inspection if they desired to see them.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): Did the War Office suggest either directly or indirectly to Colonel Morgan that he ought to take proceedings against *The Times* and the *Daily News*?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I have already answered that Question. Action was taken independently by Colonel Morgan.

Surplus Stores Offered for Sale at Bermuda, Barbados, St. Helena, and Woolwich.

*MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state under what circumstances he has advertised for sale unused lots in first-rate condition of surplus boilers, distilling apparatus, dynamos, and other plant at Bermuda, Barbados, St. Helena, and Woolwich.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The War Office has advertised for sale various lots of surplus boilers, distilling apparatus, dynamos, and other plant now lying at the stations mentioned, which were originally bought for Boer camps and which are no longer required by the War Department.

*MR. MACVEAGH: The right hon. Gentleman has not stated how it comes about that these things are offered for sale, although housed and in first-rate condition.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Because it is no use keeping plant that is not required, and it is considered cheaper to sell it than to bring it back.

*MR. MACVEAGH asked why the plant was ordered if not required.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It was provided mainly for the Boer prisoners' camps. The number of Boer prisoners was a varying number, and we had to make provision against contingencies.

Report of Butler Committee—Officers Relieved from Duty.

*MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the number of officers relieved from duty in consequence of the Report of the Butler Committee, and their names; whether they are still drawing pay; and whether he can state the distinction between suspension and relief from duty.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The number of officers relieved from duty is eight. Their names are as follows, viz:—Brevet-Colonel A. G. Hipwell, Army Service Corps; Lieutenant-Colonel H. G. Morgan, C.B., D.S.O., Army

Service Corps; Major G. F. Walton, Army Service Corps; Captain R. H. Limond, Army Service Corps; Captain P. C. De la Pryme, Army Service Corps; Colonel G. Dewar, Army Pay Department; Lieutenant-Colonel H. Swire, Army Pay Department; Captain H. de C. Huntsman, Army Pay Department. They are still drawing pay. An officer suspended from duty is placed under the same restrictions as if in open arrest. An officer relieved from duty is not placed under such restrictions and retains all his privileges as an officer.

MR. PIRIE: Have any of these officers applied for a Court-martial?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, Sir.

Press Censorship in South Africa.

MR. WHITLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Wolverhampton, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state whether the Press Censor in South Africa refused to permit newspaper correspondents to transmit information regarding the purchases and sales of stores reported by Sir William Butler's Committee; if so, on what occasions he took this action; and by whose orders, or for what reason, he so acted.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: All restrictions on telegraphic correspondence to and from South Africa were removed on July 21st, 1902. It would not, therefore, appear practicable for this censorship to have interfered in any way with the transmission of information of the transactions mentioned.

The War Secretary's Preface to the Butler Report.

MR. WHITLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Wolverhampton, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what is to be understood by the expression *sub judice* in his letter prefixed to the Report of Sir William Butler's Committee; and to what judgment is reference made in the expression quoted.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The words quoted were used merely in the ordinary acceptance of the term and designed to

express the fact that the whole of the issues upon which judgment is required had not been tried, and that many of the persons whose character and credit are concerned have either not been heard or have not had an opportunity of defending themselves by the means open to all persons accused of misfeasance or dereliction of duty.

Local Contracting System in South Africa.

MR. WHITLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War on whose authority the system of local contracts for the purchase and sale of stores was set up in South Africa; and why transactions involving six or seven millions of money were entrusted to military instead of civil officers.

MR. ARNOLD - FORSTER: The system of local contracts for the purchase of stores in South Africa was approved by the Financial Secretary on the advice of the Quartermaster-General and the Director of Contracts. The system of local sales in South Africa was initiated by Lord Kitchener and was subsequently approved by the Quartermaster-General and the Secretary of State. As these transactions were to be dealt with locally they were necessarily entrusted to the military officers on the spot.

MR. WHITLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say, for the purpose of reference, which Financial Secretary and which Secretary of State respectively was responsible?

MR. ARNOLD - FORSTER: I could give the hon. Gentleman the dates when a change took place. I was responsible for the transactions which occurred after the beginning of October, 1903. My predecessor was responsible up to that time.

MR. WHITLEY: The right hon. Gentleman has not given us the date of the transactions. Can he say who was responsible for authorising the setting up of this system of local purchase and sales?

MR. ARNOLD - FORSTER: The system was set up in 1902.

The Military Stores Report—Propose Royal Commission.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is intended to take any and, if so, what steps to carry out the recommendation of the Departmental Committee presided over by General Butler, to the effect that further inquiries on the question of sales and refunds to contractors should be made in South Africa.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I think the first part of the hon. Gentleman's Question is covered by the statements I have already made to the House. He knows it is proposed to appoint a Royal Commission to make inquiries on this subject. If that Commission find, as I do not doubt they will find, that investigations have to be made in South Africa, they will, of course, take the necessary steps to have those investigations carried out.

MR. J. H. LEWIS: Am I to take it that the Royal Commission will have power to issue a Commission to take evidence in South Africa, and that that evidence can be taken on oath, and the attendance of witnesses and the production of documents compelled?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My learned friend the Attorney-General informs me that he has received private notice of a Question by the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries dealing with some of the legal aspects of the case, and perhaps the hon. Gentleman will wait until the hon. and learned Gentleman has put his Question.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman cite the precedents on which he relies for the proposed issue on the advice of His Majesty's Ministry of a Royal Commission empowering its nominees to investigate the action and conduct of various Ministers (a) without, and (b) with, the concurrence of the House of Commons?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I only received notice as I came into the House, when it was not in my power to make any investigation into the question of precedent. But I do not think the hon. Gentleman will regard that as necessary. There is no other possible way of appointing a Royal Commission except upon the advice of the Ministers of the Crown.

MR. MACVEAGH: May I ask whether powers similar to those given to the Parnell Commission will be vested in the Army Contracts Commission, and whether the proposed Commission will be composed of Judges of the High Court, but not including Judges who have held seats in this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I may perhaps repeat in the case of this Question the Answer I have already given to another supplementary Question.

MR. BLAKE: Is it not in accordance with precedent for the House of Commons to pass Resolutions or take steps to move the Crown to issue a Royal Commission, and to concur in giving powers to the Royal Commission.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should like to look into that question before giving an Answer.

Powers of Royal Commissions.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): I beg to ask the Attorney-General whether a Royal Commission, in whatever terms it may be appointed, is entitled to require a witness to be sworn, unless a special Act of Parliament bestows upon it that power; whether a witness summoned before such a Royal Commission may, at his pleasure, refuse to attend or to be sworn, or to produce documents; and whether there is any case of a witness who has consented to be sworn, and has given false testimony before such a Commission, being indicted for perjury.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): At the same time I will ask Mr. Attorney-General, with reference to the proposed Royal Commission on the Sale of Stores in South Africa, if a Royal Commission has power

to enforce the attendance of witnesses and examine them on oath, to compel the production of documents, to punish persons guilty of contempt, or to issue a Commission to examine witnesses abroad, seeing that it is laid down in Coke's Institutes that a new oath cannot be imposed on any subject without the express authority of Parliament, and that the giving of every such oath must be warranted by Act of Parliament, or by common law time out of mind.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (SIR ROBERT FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): A Royal Commission cannot without statutory authority compel a witness to be sworn, nor can it without such authority compel the attendance of witnesses or the production of documents. For the purpose of such compulsory powers a statute would be necessary, as the Prime Minister stated yesterday. I am not aware that any case has arisen in which a prosecution has been instituted in respect of evidence given before such a Commission. I may remind my hon. and learned friend and the noble Lord, that the suggestion made yesterday by the Prime Minister was that the precedent of 1886 should be followed. In that case the Royal Commission contained a clause giving power to administer an oath, but it was stated that if the Commissioners should desire further powers they were to apply to the Government to give them. As a matter of fact, however, the work of the Commission was completed without its being found necessary for it to apply for any such statutory powers. I may add that in practice the difficulties apprehended as to the working of Royal Commissions have not been found to exist.

MR. BLAKE: May I ask whether, in the view of the hon. and learned Gentleman, a prosecution would lie supposing a witness was sworn and answered falsely.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I may remind the hon. and learned Member that technically there could not be a prosecution for perjury, as that would relate to a judicial proceeding. In such a case the prosecution would be for the common law misdemeanour of giving a false answer in an inquiry of a public nature.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE: The Answer of the Attorney-General does not cover the point I put with regard to the power of the Commission to issue a sub-Commission to examine witnesses abroad.

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: Of course a Royal Commission would have power to send out persons to make inquiry in South Africa and to receive reports. It would not have power to issue a Commission in the sense in which the term is used in a Court which sends out persons to administer oaths and take evidence. They would not have that power, but they would have power to make every inquiry.

MR. BLAKE: Am I to understand that the Attorney-General is of opinion that the taking of an oath and the answering of a question untruly is a common law offence in England?

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: If such a prosecution were instituted, it would be perfectly open to the defendant to contend, as I understand is contended by hon. and learned friends of mine, that the Crown has not power to authorise the administration of the oath. In 1842 Lord Campbell, in a report on the procedure of a Commissioner who examined a witness without administering the oath, said he thought the point a doubtful one whether, without a statute, an oath could be administered. But since he made that statement in 1842 we have had four cases under different Governments in which a clause has been inserted in the Commission empowering the administering of an oath, and I do not think any one who has regard to the importance of practice in affording us guidance for our procedure in these matters can ignore that in 1860, 1862, 1867, and 1886 a clause to that effect was inserted.

MR. BLAKE: Is it not the case that since these precedents there have been at least two instances in which Parliament itself has expressly by Act given the power to administer the oath?

SIR ROBERT FINLAY: I think the hon. and learned Member overlooks the fact that for the purpose of giving com-

pulsory powers a statute is necessary. [OPPOSITION cheers.] I am merely stating what was stated by the Prime Minister yesterday. The hon. and learned Member's Question seemed to be directed to the question of the power of administering the oath.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): May I ask a Question of which I gave notice last night, viz., whether, in view of the peculiar circumstances of this case, and considering the fact that if this Royal Commission be appointed, although the attendance of officers might be compelled through the power the Government has over them, any one likely to be indicted for fraud who is not an officer could obviously not be compelled to attend, the Attorney-General will consider the desirability of advising the Government to proceed by statute, as otherwise the proceeding may be entirely farcical.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I would appeal to the Prime Minister to tell us whether he will not say at once, in view of all that has been disclosed by the discussion of this subject, affecting a most important matter, whether the Government still adhere to the intention of not having a statutory Commission, what harm would be done by a statutory Commission, and why that obvious course of having a complete inquiry is to be neglected.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman is wrong in his facts. So far from having said we would not have the aid of a statutory Commission, we have distinctly and over and over again stated that if, when the Commission is at work, the necessity for a Commission with statutory powers should be made clear, we should of course grant one.—

MR. MACVEAGH (interrupting): What would happen if the necessity arose in the recess?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman has been asked a Question, and is entitled to complete his reply.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: So far I have confined myself to correcting what was

no doubt a slip. The right hon. Gentleman then asks me whether we have any objection to appointing a statutory Commission. The suggestion I made yesterday was based upon a precedent to which the right hon. Gentleman was a concurring party. It was based upon a precedent which dealt with matters *in pari materia* to those we are now discussing. It therefore seemed to me that we could not go far wrong if we followed a precedent having this authority behind it. But we have no objection to the statutory powers. The clauses necessary to give these powers are common form; and if the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, who initiated this conversation, were to consult with my learned friend near me, I am sure they would arrive at a conclusion as to the clauses which ought to be introduced into the Bill. That Bill, I presume, would be uncontroversial. I should introduce it and treat it as an uncontroversial Bill. I am confident no opposition will be given to it on this side, and if opposition is given to it on the other side, the responsibility will rest there. As I am on my legs, I may perhaps ask, with regard to this Commission, whether I am to take the Question put to me by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Longford as indicating, in the view of the Opposition generally, that the reference should be so drawn as to enable the investigation to deal with the action, not only of the subordinate officers of the Government, but of the Government itself. Is that the desire?

After a pause.

MR. WHITLEY asked whether the members of the Commission would be nominated by His Majesty's Government?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether I can get any guidance from that Question. I should be glad of any guidance from the right hon. Gentleman opposite.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman need not be too particular in demanding guidance

from this side of the House, seeing that he has himself twice changed his plans. But let me ask him, do we understand notwithstanding all that has been said—even to-day—that the right hon. Gentleman proposes to introduce a Bill constituting a statutory Commission for this inquiry? Then may I further ask whether the names of the Commissioners will be included in that Bill as usual? When the right hon. Gentleman asks me whether on this side of the House the Bill will be treated as a non-controversial measure, my reply is that, of course, in its main purpose the Bill will be non-controversial; but it is impossible to say, until we see the terms of reference and the names of the Commissioners, if that applies to every detail. Upon these we must leave ourselves open to take such course as we may consider necessary under the circumstances. But saving these sub-points, upon which we may properly claim some reserve—and everyone in the House will admit it to be a proper reservation—saving these we shall do our best to expedite the passage of the Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not quite comprehend the first part of the right hon. Gentleman's observations. I have done my best to meet the views expressed. I do not know why the right hon. Gentleman should make that a matter of reproach. I made a suggestion yesterday, and it does not appear to meet the views of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I have now, I hope to their satisfaction, told them that I am willing to agree to the appointment of a statutory Commission. An hon. Gentleman opposite asks me whether it is proposed to go on with the Commission at once, and I have to say that I will not be a party to any dilatory action. I propose also to introduce concurrently and independently a Bill giving the necessary powers to the Commission. I gather from what he has said that the right hon. Gentleman is not prepared to pledge himself and his friends to allow the Bill to pass, as it ought to be passed, *sub silentio*, unless he is satisfied with the reference. ["And the names?"] As to the names I do not ask his assistance, but as to the terms of reference I ask the right hon. Gentleman, does he desire that the reference shall include review of the

action of the Government and the higher officials or does he not ?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : Well, that is a point upon which it would be very convenient that my hon. and learned friend the Member for Dumfries should, as has been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman himself, confer with the Attorney-General, the corresponding legal authority on that bench.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : Great as is the admiration and regard I have for the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, I do not propose to ask him to confer with my hon. and learned friend near me on a question of policy; the conference I had in mind had reference to drafting arrangements. The question of policy there is, I presume, no wish to delegate to my learned friend.

MR. BLAKE : Will not the answer largely depend on the result of researches which, in an Answer given to me this afternoon, I was told had not been made ? I asked whether there was any precedent for an inquiry by Commission into the action of the Administration itself having been made with the concurrence of Parliament.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE : May I ask, do we clearly understand—the words of the Prime Minister were not distinctly heard in this part of the House—did the right hon. Gentleman ask if we wished the action of the Government and of higher officials to be included in the inquiry ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : Yes.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE : Is he aware that the Government are already pledged to an inquiry that will cover the responsibility of higher officials ? An Answer from the Secretary of State for War said that responsibility attached to the general officer commanding, but that the actual nature of the responsibility would be ascertained by further inquiry.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : Well, then, I restrict my Question and exclude any reference to officials who are not members of the Government; and the Question I

put is whether the right hon. Gentleman considers it desirable that the conduct of the Government should form part of the subject of inquiry by Commission ?

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.) : I desire to ask if the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the Bill creating the Parnell Commission contained the names of the Commissioners; that the House was asked to allow the Bill to pass *sub silentio*; that the request was not assented to by Mr. Parnell, who claimed the right to discuss the Bill and to propose Amendments, and that the Bill was discussed and Amendments were proposed and accepted by the Government ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : Yes, I remember the circumstances. No doubt Mr. Parnell, as the person into whose conduct the inquiry was directed, did claim that right. Nobody on this bench is going to claim such a right.

The Vote of Censure.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : On another subject, or on another phase of the same question, may I ask what facilities the right hon. Gentleman proposes to give for the discussion of the Motion standing in the name of my hon. and learned friend the Member for Dumfries.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : Monday next, Sir.

Delay in Delivery of New Field Guns for India.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what has been the extent of the delay of the delivery of the new field guns for India which is alluded to in the Memorandum of General Sir Edmond Elles.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER : The first Indian order was for three batteries Horse Artillery and eighteen Field Batteries. The guns and carriages of the Horse Artillery Batteries are reported for shipment and the limbers and ammunition wagons either ready for inspection or approved. Of the 114 guns and carriages required for the Field Batteries, forty-three are reported for shipment, the remainder being either ready for inspection

or approved. The limbers and ammunition wagons are in a similarly forward condition. The second orders for eight batteries Horse Artillery and thirteen Field Batteries are due for completion in October, and there is every reason to believe that they will be complete at that date.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE asked what was the shortage complained of by the Indian Government.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER was understood to reply that the only thing he could trace was an anticipation of delay. The guns were not ready by the 30th April as originally intended, but they were now ready.

Bread Contracts for Irish Troops.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he can state if the contract for the supply of bread to the troops at Holywood and Ballykinlar camps, county Down, were in both cases given to firms making the lowest tender; and whether in either case any complaints have been made as to the quality supplied; and, if so, what action has been taken.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield): In both cases the lowest offer for bread was accepted. There have been three complaints, one entailing rejection of the bread and its replacement. Otherwise the contracts are reported satisfactory.

MR. MACVEAGH: At which camp?

MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT: I cannot say.

Private Use of Regimental Horses.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the practice is growing up in Dublin of officers of regiments stationed in that city using Army horses belonging to their regiments for the purpose of bringing parties to and from balls, polo matches, and race meetings; and whether, seeing that such conduct inter-

feres with carmen plying for hire, he will take such steps as will put a stop to the alleged grievance.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Nothing is known at the War Office of the matters alluded to. I must point out to the hon. Member that officers paying hire for Government chargers are entitled to drive them.

MR. NANNETTI: If I give the right hon. Gentleman definite information as to the men who drove the parties, will he cause further inquiries to be made?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It is a matter for the General Officer Commanding.

MR. NANNETTI: Surely if I give definite information I am entitled to an Answer.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: My Answer is as to the principle involved. If the hon. Member can furnish me with any facts they will be considered.

Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company, Limited.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received a petition or petitions from public meetings held in Newfoundland, to protest against a Bill passed by the Colonial Legislature on June 12th last, to approve and confirm an agreement dated January 12th, 1905, between the Government of Newfoundland and the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company, Limited; and whether he will advise His Majesty to withhold his assent to the Bill until an opportunity shall have been afforded to the electors of Newfoundland to express their opinion upon it at a general election.

The following Questions also appeared on the Paper on the same subject—

MR. WHITLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the fact that the contract entered into by the Government of Newfoundland on January 12th last,

with the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company, Limited, contains provisions which are in contravention of the provisions of the Crown Lands Act of 1903, he will advise His Majesty to withhold his assent to the Bill for confirming the said contract until full inquiry shall have been made into the circumstances under which the contract was entered into.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, seeing that the Government of Newfoundland has entered into an agreement with a limited company, called the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company, Limited, to lease to the said company for a term of ninety-nine years, with a right of continuous renewal, an area of 3,000 square miles of land in the colony, including the inland waters and full mineral and quarry rights throughout the leased area, and that the paid agent of the said company spoke and voted in the Legislative Council on the Bill for approving and confirming the said contract, he proposes to take any, and, if any, what steps in the matter.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to a contract entered into by the Government of Newfoundland of the one part and the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company, Limited, of the other part on the 12th of January last, and now printed in the schedule to a Bill lately passed by the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of Newfoundland; and whether, having regard to the unusual provisions of the said contract, he will cause a copy of the contract and of the Bill to confirm the same to be printed for the information of the House.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to Section 11 of an indenture made and entered into at St. John's, in the Colony of Newfoundland, between His Excellency the Governor of Newfoundland and the Anglo-Newfoundland Develop-

ment Company, Limited, which section gives to a limited liability company the right of compulsory expropriation of lands held by citizens of the colony within a very large area of the colony; and whether he will advise His Majesty to withhold his assent to the Bill confirming the said indenture until clauses shall have been inserted in the indenture for the more effectual safeguarding of the rights of the Crown and of the citizens of the colony in the lands affected.

MR. BLAKE: Will the right hon. Gentleman also state whether this measure has received the assent of the representative of the Crown in the Colonies, and has so become an Act, and whether he proposes to follow or depart in any way from the principles of action stated by his predecessors in the case of the Newfoundland Railway Act?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. LYTTTELTON, Warwick and Leamington): Until I receive the Act as finally passed by the Newfoundland Legislature on the subject of the concession to the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Company, Limited, I am not in a position to decide what action I shall take in the matter, but in the meantime I would refer the hon. Members to Mr. Chamberlain's despatch of December 5th, 1898, to the Governor of Newfoundland, published in Command Paper 9137, as laying down the general principles which have guided my predecessors in considering the question of advising His Majesty in regard to the disallowance of the Acts of Colonies possessing responsible government.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): Has the Act received the assent of the Governor of the colony, or is it reserved for His Majesty's decision?

MR. LYTTTELTON: I think it has but I have not yet received the Act.

MR. WHITLEY: Is it correct that this Act was passed in a very hurried manner through all its stages by the suspension of the Standing Orders, that as soon as it was known to have been passed great indignation was shown in the colony,

and that public meetings were held and petitions drawn up, and will the right hon. Gentleman undertake to reserve the consideration of the matter until the public of the colony have had an opportunity of representing their view of the case?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member should give notice of that Question. It introduces fresh matter not mentioned on the Paper.

MR. WHITLEY: I think it will be found in another Question upon the Paper relating to the same matter.

MR. SPEAKER: There is not a word in these Questions about the suspension of the Standing Orders.

MR. WHITLEY: I will put down a further Question.

The Congo Commission of Inquiry— Dr. Baccari's Report.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can now state when the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the condition of the Independent State of the Congo is likely to be issued; whether His Majesty's Government have received a copy of Dr. Baccari's Report to the Italian Government, in which he deals with the state of affairs in that country; and whether a translation of Dr. Baccari's Report will be presented to the House.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): In accordance with the promise given in my Answer to the Question asked by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean on the 23rd ultimo,† His Majesty's Government have represented to the Congo Government the importance of publishing the Report of the Commission of Inquiry as soon as possible; but they have not yet been informed when the Report is likely to be ready. His Majesty's Government have just received a copy of Dr. Baccari's Report as published in the Italian papers, and the

suggestion made by the hon. Member will be considered.

Smokeless Coal in British North Borneo.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is yet in a position to furnish information in regard to the reported discovery of smokeless coal at Jambongan on the north-east coast of the British North Borneo Company's territory.

EARL PERCY: No definite information in regard to the coal has yet been obtained. A telegram has recently been received from the engineer in charge of the works to say that samples have been sent home but that the excavations have not yet been completed.

Wages of Foreign Seamen on British Ships.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that the current rate of wages for seamen is higher in London than at Antwerp; and whether he is prepared to accept an Amendment to the Aliens Bill prohibiting the bringing over of foreign seamen at low rates of wages from Continental ports to the United Kingdom for British ships.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Yes Sir, I have seen the Answer which was given to the hon. Member on the 29th May‡ by the Secretary to the Board of Trade to this effect, but the Amendment to the Aliens Bill which he suggests appears to me to be outside the proper scope of the Bill.

South Eastern Railway -Carriage Lighting.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will recommend the South-Eastern Railway Company to arrange for the carriages of passenger trains to be lighted when passing through tunnels, especially between Hildenborough and London.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxlvi., 1120.

‡ See page 65.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): I have communicated with the Managing Committee of the South Eastern and Chatham Railway on the subject of the hon. Member's Question, and am informed that it has been a long-standing practice on that line to light all carriages which have to pass through tunnels, and that every train running between Hildenborough and London is so lighted. It is added that since the commencement of this year there have only been six cases of failure of light from accidental causes in individual compartments.

School Teachers' Houses.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is aware that considerable doubt exists as to the liability of county educational authorities for payment of the whole rent for school teachers' houses; whether he will consider the advisability of issuing a circular to such authorities defining their liabilities as to the payment of rent for teachers' houses, and their powers as to charging three-fourths of such payment upon the parish served by the school.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): It does not appear that the payment of rent for a teacher's house forming part of the premises of a voluntary school is either capital expenditure or rent on account of the provision or improvement of a public elementary school within the meaning of Section 18 (c) of the Act. The county authority would therefore be liable to pay the whole rent of the teacher's house as a part of the maintenance of the school. I do not think that there is any necessity for sending a circular to local authorities on this point. I am not aware of any difficulties experienced by them on this subject.

Robert Smith's Estate.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he can state how many receivers have been in charge of the estate of Robert Smith since it first came under the

jurisdiction of the Dublin Court of Bankruptcy; what are the total sums paid to receivers as remuneration; what was the original value of the estate; how many years the estate has been in bankruptcy; and when it is expected to be wound up.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): This matter does not in any way come within my control. I am, however, informed by the Chief Registrar of the Court of Bankruptcy that the estate mentioned came under the jurisdiction of that Court in May, 1895, when a fund was transferred thereto from the Chancery Division. Since that time the estate has been in charge of but one receiver, namely, one of the official assignees. The total sum which has been paid to him as remuneration is £247 0s. 6d. The fund transferred from the Chancery Division in 1895 amounted to £2,881 16s. 4d., and between 1895 and 1900 the assignee recovered additional funds amounting to £2,116 1s. 2d. From these sums, dividends amounting to 17s. 6½d. in the £ were paid. The estate was considered to be wound up in February, 1900, but a further fund, apparently part of the estate, was recently traced in a Chancery suit, and the destination of that fund is now under consideration by the Master of the Rolls. The Chief Registrar is unable to state what sums, if any, were paid to other receivers under the Court of Chancery, or what was the original value of the estate.

MR. MACVEAGH: When did this case first come under the jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery?

MR. ATKINSON: I have no record of that.

MR. MACVEAGH: It first came into the Court in 1793. Can the right hon. Gentleman hold out any hope that the estate will be wound up in the course of the next century.

MR. ATKINSON: I was not responsible for the case in its earlier stages.

Irish Boards.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the total number of boards in Ireland exercising executive or other functions, whether wholly or partially under Government control, and the name of each.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): There are in all twelve such boards. The members of the Local Government Board, General Prisons Board, Board of National Education, Board of Intermediate Education, Board of Charitable Donations and Bequests, Loan Fund Board, and one-half the number of Commissioners of Endowed Schools are appointed and removable by the Crown. All these Departments, with three exceptions, are guided in the exercise of their statutory duties by Rules, Orders, or Schemes approved by the Lord-Lieutenant. The Congested Districts Board is regulated by the provisions of Section 34 of the Land Act, 1891; and the Boards of Agriculture and Technical Instruction are regulated by the 8th and 9th Sections of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Act of 1899. The Board of Public Works is under the Treasury, and the Board of Irish Lights under the Board of Trade.

MR. MACVEAGH: That is not a complete list surely! The right hon. Gentleman has forgotten about twenty-three.

MR. WALTER LONG: I have given the hon. Member all the information I could collect.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): You have forgotten the most important of all—the Dublin Harbour Board.

Sir Douglas Brooke's Speech.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to a statement recently made in a speech by Sir Douglas Brooke, baronet, a magistrate and a deputy-lieutenant of the county of Fermanagh, at Maguiresbridge in that county, while addressing an audience of

Orangemen, that, at the time of Mr. Gladstone's second Home Rule Bill, he had given out rifles to his Protestant tenantry, and had taught some of those Protestants how to shoot those rifles straight, and that there were a good many of those rifles still in the country, he can state what action has been taken by the Lord Chancellor in consequence of Sir Douglas Brooke's conduct having been brought under his notice for a second time.

MR. WALTER LONG: The Lord Chancellor's attention has again been drawn to this matter, and he informs me that he has nothing to add to the reply given to the hon. Member's previous Question on the subject.

Irish Land Purchase—Negotiation Fees.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in sales under the Irish Land Act, 1903, where the vendors or their agents have agreed to pay the land clerks of the estate offices one-half per cent. on the purchase money or one-sixth of the total amount of the land agency negotiation fees, he will ask the Treasury and the Estates Commissioners to arrange that the negotiation fees shall be paid to the negotiators within a reasonable time (say six months) from the date of signing of the purchase agreements, and not deferred until the payment of the purchase money, having regard to the fact that when sales take place under the Act some of these clerks lose their appointments and others have their salaries reduced.

MR. WALTER LONG: Under Section 23, Sub-section 12, of the Act, these fees can only be paid out of the purchase money when distributed. There is no other fund available for the purpose.

Kinvara Estate, County Galway.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the claim of the Scottish Union Assurance Company to have the sale of the Kinvara Estate, county Galway, carried through under Section 1 of the Land Act of 1903, and which was reserved on a point of

law by the Estates Commissioners for the consideration of Mr. Justice Meredith, has been decided; and, if so, with what result.

MR. WALTER LONG: The hearing of the point of law referred to was postponed by the Judicial Commissioner on the application of the parties, but it will be entered for hearing at an early date.

Mallow Urban Council Audit.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a recent audit of the accounts of Mallow Urban Council, and to the action of Mr. Richard Bourke, an auditor of the Local Government Board, in surcharging three members of the council with the sum of 3s., being the cost of framing an address of congratulation, adopted by the Town Commissioners on the 12th September, 1902, for presentation to His Holiness Pope Leo XIII., on the attainment of his Pontifical Jubilee; and if he can explain why this surcharge has been made, especially in view of the fact that the inhabitants of Mallow were unanimously in favour of the action of the Commissioners, and that, as a result of the examination of accounts involving an expenditure of nearly £6,000, this item was the only one which Mr. Bourke disallowed.

MR. WALTER LONG: The facts are generally as stated. No statutory authority exists for any expenditure from the rates for the purpose mentioned, and the auditor was, therefore, bound to surcharge the amount.

Imperial Yeomanry at Inniskillen.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that some time ago, on the occasion of an Imperial Yeomanry dance in the Orange Hall, Inniskillen, a number of drunken yeomen paraded the streets for several hours cheering and shouting, that on the following morning the knockers on the doors of over thirty houses were found to have been wrenched, that the constabulary while engaged in

investigating the occurrence discovered some of the knockers in the Orange Hall; what explanation they give for failing to bring the perpetrators of the outrage to justice; and what steps they intend taking in future to protect the property of the inhabitants when Yeomanry functions are being held.

MR. WALTER LONG: It is not the case that any of the Yeomanry, who are an extremely well behaved body of men, paraded the streets cheering and shouting. It was, however, found on the morning following the date in question that fourteen knockers had been wrenched off doors in the town. Suspicion strongly pointed to a person who was not one of the Yeomanry as being the offender, but the police were unable to procure evidence of the fact. One of the knockers was found in the Orange Hall. The police will continue to use their best endeavours to protect the property of the inhabitants.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: Will this appear in the next Return of outrages in Ireland?

MR. MACVEAGH: Will it not appear as thirty outrages?

[No Answer was returned.]

A Dying Voter at Fintona.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the circumstances of the death of Mary Jane McKenna, at Fintona, county Tyrone; whether he is aware that the medical officer of health in the district refused to certify that she was fit to be removed from her cabin to the polling booth, and that notwithstanding this refusal the Unionist agents removed her on the day of the county council elections, after freely supplying the woman with wine; whether he is aware that the woman died on the way to the polling station; whether the facts were reported by the police to the coroner; and, if so, whether he can state the grounds on which the coroner decided not to hold an inquest.

MR. WALTER LONG: I am informed that this person, who was a confirmed invalid, persisted in attending to vote of her own accord and contrary to the advice of her medical attendant. The medical officer of health neither refused nor was asked for a certificate. It is not the case that Unionist agents removed the woman from her cabin or freely supplied her with wine. She was given a spoonful of wine as ordered by the doctor. The police did not consider it necessary to report the circumstances of the death to the coroner. The matter does not call for the intervention of the Government.

Irish Towns and the New Marine Post Office.

MR. NANNETTI: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he will furnish a list of the Irish towns, excluding Dublin, for which it was proposed to make up direct bags on the sea post office between New York and Liverpool; and a Return of the number of ordinary letters and the number of registered letters from the "Baltic's" mail, arriving at Queenstown on 1st instant, for each of those towns which instead of being forwarded in direct bags were sent to Dublin for disposal.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Apart from the bags for Dublin, direct bags are at present made up in the sea post offices between New York and Liverpool for the Irish towns of Ballinasloe, Belfast, Castlereagh, Claremorris, Clonmel, Cork, Dundalk, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick, Lisburn, Londonderry, Lurgan, Mallow, Newry, Portadown, Sligo, Waterford, and Westport. This list is subject to revision as circumstances may require after further experience of the working of the new system. No record was kept of correspondence received in the Dublin bags instead of being included in other direct bags made up on board the packet "Baltic" on the occasion referred to by the hon. Member; but it is estimated that some 800 or 900 letters were so treated.

Irish Sorters and the New Marine Post Office.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether

his attention has been directed to a resolution unanimously adopted by the Queenstown Urban District Council, protesting against the exclusive appointment of officials from the Liverpool postal department to the position of marine mail sorters, between New York and Liverpool, thus ignoring the claims of Irish officials who have had long experience in sorting the American mails between Dublin and Queenstown; and whether he will consider the desirability of recognising the claims of duly qualified Irish officials by allocating to them a proportion of these new positions.

LORD STANLEY: My attention has not been previously called to the resolution to which the hon. Member refers; and I have not seen a copy of it. With regard to the last part of the Question, I must refer the hon. Member to replies which I have given in this House to the effect that convenience in working the system and competency to perform the duties will govern the selection of officers for employment in the Transatlantic Sea Post Offices. I cannot admit that any particular officers have a claim to such employment.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Why have no Irishmen been appointed to any of these positions?

LORD STANLEY: I have in each case appointed the man recommended to me as the most competent for the duty?

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Then are no Irish officials competent or duly qualified?

LORD STANLEY: I did not say they were not competent, but not as competent.

MR. NANNETTI: Have not these men done the work successfully for many years?

LORD STANLEY: This is the first time the scheme has been in operation.

MR. NANNETTI: At sea, but not on shore.

NEW BILL.

FOREIGN SHIPS (STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS).

Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on Foreign Ships (Statutory Requirements), in Session 1904, be referred to the Select Committee on Foreign Ships (Statutory Requirements).—(*Mr. Bonar Law.*)

SUPPLY [11TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[*Mr. GRANT LAWSON* (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,633, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of His Majesty's Secretary for Scotland and Subordinate Office, Expenses under the Inebriates Acts, 1879 to 1900, and Expenses under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, including a Grant in Aid of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Fund."

**MR. WEIR* (Ross and Cromarty) moved a reduction of the amount by £100. First he desired to enter his protest against the absence from that House of the Secretary for Scotland. In the Lord-Advocate they had a very courteous representative of the Scottish Office, but in this matter Ireland was far better off than Scotland, for it had three representatives on the Front Bench as against one for Scotland. He held that the Government should arrange matters so that the Secretary for Scotland should be a Member of the House of Commons, and he therefore desired on that occasion to protest against the appointment as Secretary for Scotland of a Member of

the other House whose knowledge and experience were not sufficient for the vigorous discharge of the duties of the office.

He desired to draw attention to the failure to deal with the Report of a local Committee appointed on the 15th December, 1902, to inquire into the recommendations contained in the Report of the Crofters Commission on the social condition of the Island of Lewis. Although that Committee reported eighteen months ago on the subjects of Fisheries, Education, Land, and Public Health, nothing had been done, notwithstanding the fact that the means at the disposal of the Department were ample to make an effective beginning. The line fishermen of Lewis asked the late Secretary for Scotland to receive a deputation to lay their grievances before him, but he declined to receive them. They had no Dukes behind them. When the Duke of Sutherland and the Duke of Portland, or their factors, appealed to the late Secretary for Scotland on behalf of the fishermen of Sutherland and Caithness the Mansfield Commission was appointed, and the Report of that Commission had recently been issued. He hoped that the present Secretary for Scotland would do something for the poor fishermen in the Island of Lewis, and would not resort to the delays that the late Secretary for Scotland had practised. It was not right that the most congested part of the Highlands of Scotland should be so treated. The poverty, starvation, and misery which existed in the island could be averted if the Secretary for Scotland would arouse himself and do something for these fishermen and the crofters and cottars. He hoped the Secretary for Scotland would not adopt the late Secretary for Scotland's policy of the "eternal shunt."

He complained of the conversion of 40,000 acres of sheep-farming land into deer forests in the Lochbroom district of Ross-shire without any effort being made by the Government to secure any portion of the land for the benefit of the people. Look at the state of the fishing industry in the Island of Lewis. Official returns showed that whereas during the four years between 1889-1893

526,545 cwts. of fish were landed in the island, the quantity landed between 1900 and 1904 had fallen to 283,141 cwts., a fall of just half in the short space of sixteen years. The year 1889 was the first year in which a record was kept, but it was stated by the fishermen that the catches were still larger in the years prior to 1889. That meant starvation and misery, which could be avoided if the Scottish Office would arouse itself. The figures were simply appalling, and the Lewis fishermen were naturally disappointed at the failure of the authorities to come to their assistance. They were a most honest and deserving set of men: and he sincerely hoped the Secretary for Scotland would look into their case. In regard to education he had to complain that very little had been done.

Now with regard to land. There was plenty of land in Ross-shire which could have been secured for the people if the late Secretary for Scotland had infused some energy into the Congested District Board. In support of this statement the hon. Member read a letter which he had received from one of his constituents some time ago saying that in the district of Lochbroom alone 40,000 acres of land had, in the short space of four years, been converted from sheep farms into deer forests, with the result that fewer hands were now employed. If the late Secretary for Scotland had been watchful he would probably have been able to secure some of that land for the benefit of the people. His correspondent further stated that there was now very little trade in the place, and that unless something was done to bring about an improvement the state of matters must assume a serious aspect. The only provision for new crofts in Ross-shire was the breaking up of the small farm of Aignish Lewis into thirty-two crofts.

The Secretary for Scotland was head of the Local Government Board in Scotland, and in that connection he must complain of the noble Lord's neglect to secure better sanitary conditions in the Highlands, and especially in the Island of Lewis. There were 4,000 crofters' and cottars' houses in the Island, and in the greater number of them the apartments where the people lived were only divided by

a handrail from the places where the cattle were kept, the one door being the only means of access for both human beings and cattle. Hon. Members representing constituencies in the Lowlands laughed at this state of things, but they had really no idea of the insanitary conditions under which the people lived in the Hebrides. The islanders required education in regard to matters of sanitation, and a medical officer or sanitary inspector should be sent to explain to them the importance of giving better attention to questions of health in relation to their mode of living. The present state of things should not be allowed to go on. There was one small hospital at Stornoway, but for forty-five miles in one direction, and thirty miles in another, there was no further accommodation for the sick poor.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Local Government Board Vote is not now before us.

*MR. WEIR said the Vote for the salary of the Secretary for Scotland was now before the Committee, and he was complaining of that Minister not doing his duty, in so far as he neglected to see that others for whom he was responsible did their duty. He hoped this matter of insanitary dwellings would be attended to.

Referring to the question of foreign trawlers in the Moray Firth, the hon. Member said the Secretary for Scotland, who was chief of the Fishery Board for Scotland, had not taken the steps which might have been expected in order to protect the interests of the line fishermen. He should urge the Foreign Office to approach the signatories to the North Sea Fisheries Convention with the view to secure an understanding in regard to the closing of areas such as the Moray Firth. The Firth was closed against British trawlers, but Grimsby trawlers registered under the Norwegian flag, and thus carried on their operations in the Moray Firth to the detriment of the line fishermen. If these trawlers could not be cleared out of the Moray Firth, a by-law should be made which would have the effect

of preventing the fish so caught being sold in British ports. He had frequently called attention to this grievance, and yet years went by and nothing was done. He wished also to direct attention to the need for better transit facilities in the remote parts of the Highlands. He had for several years suggested that motor-cars might be provided in the remote districts for the purpose of bringing produce to the market. He hoped the Secretary for Scotland would now give the question his serious consideration, especially as the adoption of motor-cars for such purposes was strongly recommended by the Mansfield Commission. So long as the Secretary for Scotland was not in that House the state of matters could not be satisfactory; he should be there so that they might speak to him face to face. Before sitting down he desired to state that the Lewis Committee had reported that Port Ness Harbour was extremely unsatisfactory and that no more money should be spent on it. He was informed that Messrs. Stevenson, Edinburgh, were the engineers of that harbour, and they were still the engineers to the Scottish Office. The £15,000 spent on Port Ness Harbour was so much money thrown away. It was expended in 1891-2, on the eve of an election, with the view of catching votes for the Unionist candidate. Years ago he brought to the notice of the Scottish Office that the harbour would be of no use unless the silted sand was removed. He moved to reduce the salary of the Secretary for Scotland by £100.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,533, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Weir.*)

*MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness) said he thought that the condition of the House indicated that Scotland was a well-governed country. But still he had one or two grievances to bring before the Committee in reference to the action of the Congested Districts Board of Scotland. He agreed with his hon. friend that they ought to have the Secretary for Scotland in that House; but, failing that, he did not think they could have a better official representative of Scottish

administration than the Lord-Advocate. The condition of the West Highlands was extremely interesting in every respect, the people were intellectually and physically a fine people; and were worth preserving. Through no fault of their own, the population there had been reduced to a state of abject poverty. In fact, there was much greater poverty in the western parts of Inverness-shire than in any part of Ireland, and a great deal less was being done to meet that chronic poverty than was being done in Ireland. He did not agree with his hon. friend in his wholesale condemnation of the Scottish Congested Districts Board.

*MR. WEIR said he had only condemned the action of the Congested Districts Board in regard to the Island of Lewis.

*MR. JOHN DEWAR said he could not agree that the Congested Districts Board deserved the same condemnation as in previous years; because he recognised that there had been of late a distinct improvement in their methods and operations, and that the Board was apparently waking up to the importance of the duty which they had to discharge. He noticed that they had purchased at a fair price a large tract of land for crofter settlements. That was an experiment which ought to have a fair chance. But he wanted to direct the attention of the Committee to the fact that this was a change of policy and would have fair results. Hitherto allotments for crofters had been obtained under the Crofters Act, and these holdings were held under a landlord. But now, with this large purchase of land, they were proceeding to set up a class of peasant proprietors. He approved of that; but he foresaw that it would lead to very important results. It was not in human nature for a tenant, who was paying a very much larger annual rent for his holding than the tenant on an adjoining property who would get his freehold in a certain number of years under the land purchase system, to be contented. That was shown in Ireland in the case of the tenants on the Dillon Estate, and those on the De Freyne Estate. The Government must keep in view that, having begun this system of land purchase, they

could not stop there. Personally, he did not wish to see the landlords of Scotland expropriated. Whatever might be the case in Ireland, he believed that it would be a great misfortune if the Scotch landlords were expropriated. They were, as a rule, very excellent landlords, and were on excellent terms with their tenants. He did not know if it would be good that the tenants under the Crofters Act should be made what were called peasant proprietors. There was much to be said on both sides. One very noticeable feature of the Report of the Congested Districts Board was the apparent willingness of the landlords to get tenants on their properties. Many proprietors had applied to the Congested Districts Board to aid them in getting crofters to settle on their estates. That was, he was glad to say, an encouraging feature. The income from deer forests was not altogether a reliable income, the best results were got from a fair mixture of all kinds of tenants, and he believed that the landlords themselves would largely improve the value of their estates by a judicious settlement of crofters.

Another feature of interest in the Report was the encouragement of technical education in the Highlands. He thought the scheme was an excellent one, and that the Board had done extremely well in regard to it. The life of a crofter's son was something like this: he remained at school till he was fourteen or fifteen years of age, when he went to assist another croft till he was eighteen or so, and then proceeded to the mainland as a labourer with a labourer's pay, and came back ultimately it may be to his home. What the Congested Districts Board had done was to put themselves in communication with the employers of labour on the mainland and had arranged to send a certain number of boys to learn a trade, and to pay the difference between the pay of an apprentice and the cost of living on the mainland during the term of apprenticeship. The result would be that these boys would be in the position of trained tradesmen instead of labourers and would be able to earn a good wage, wherever their lot was cast. Then, although the population of the Western Hebrides was almost entirely a fishing population, there had scarcely been a single application for

entry into the Royal Navy. He could only explain that by the fact that there was, rightly or wrongly, a very strong prejudice amongst them against the Navy. The Congested Districts Board might help in removing that prejudice, and so secure a large supply of first-rate material for the Royal Navy.

There was one part of the Report of the Congested Districts Board of which he did not approve. He had drawn attention to the deplorable poverty, destitution, and congestion which existed in Long Island and in South Uist over and over again, to relieve which the Board had done absolutely nothing. The people were anxious to get land and were able and willing to work it; and he believed that there was land which might be available for them. He had been very much interested in the recent Report of the Mansfield Commission, and particularly in that part of it which pointed out the advantages of a fishermen having a croft. He believed that the proprietors were not unwilling that the fishermen should have crofts. He had specially to complain that the Congested Districts Board had not done more to develop the fishing industry. Nothing had been done in regard to South Uist and the Long Island generally. No doubt money was needed; but what was more needed was the organisation of the industry, and an effort made to get the produce of the fishery to market. To show the inefficient management of the Congested Districts Board, last year there was considerable mackerel fishing in the Western Hebrides; and the Congested Districts Board were asked to provide nets; some were sent, but it turned out that they were not suitable nets for the district at all, and he knew of one island where thirty-six nets only caught thirty mackerel. The Board had not tackled the matter in a business-like way. They should have a report from a competent man as in the case of the Irish Board. Again, in connection with the herring fishery, the fishermen had great difficulty in disposing of their produce. The Irish Congested Districts Board provided curing stations, which resulted in an enormous saving. As an instance of the necessity for this in the Western Hebrides

one man informed him that he carried £40 worth of herrings to one market, and then had to take them to another and sell them for £6. If the Congested Districts Board had a curing station where the herrings were first offered the herring income would have kept the fisherman's family for six months. There was also great difficulty in getting lobsters to market. He had heard of one man who sent £10 worth of lobsters to London; they were delayed by the bad steamer connection; and when they arrived they were not worth anything at all. If the Congested Districts Board exercised a little interest in the steamer service a very great deal might be done to improve the condition of the people. But apparently no effort was being made to deal with the fisheries at all. He did not think that there would be complete efficiency until the composition of the Board was changed. It was composed of excellent members; but, unlike the Irish Board which met about once a month, it rarely met at all. The secretary only devoted half his time to the business of the Board and was employed at the Exchequer office. The Board itself did not appear to look for any opportunity to help the people until Members of Parliament and others drew attention to their grievances. He was very strongly of opinion that the Congested Districts Board should be amalgamated with the Crofter Commission—an arrangement which would involve less expense and promote efficiency.

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Inverness had given a very valuable contribution to the discussion, especially with regard to the Congested Districts Board. He sympathised cordially with his hon. friend's views. There ought not to be a system of dual ownership, which must eventuate in trouble. If the Congested Districts Board purchased land they ought to retain the control of it in their own hands. He could not agree that the ownership of land improved the character of the individual. He could not imagine any difference of character being produced because a man was a freeholder, rather than a tenant of land. He would give every

credit to the Congested Districts Board in regard to the management of their affairs. There was one case, however, in his own constituency to which he wished to direct attention. In Whalsay, Shetland, there was only one farm on the island, and there was a large number of crofters who were very congested, and who naturally desired to live where their fathers lived. The result was that they agreed to take over the farm at a valuation; and they put together all the money they could possibly get. The cost was a great deal more than they anticipated owing to increased valuation of stock; and he regretted that the Congested Districts Board was not able to take a more sympathetic view of the matter than they did. If they had acted otherwise, they would have shown to the poor people of Scotland that they had a lively sympathy with them, as he himself believed they had. It was not too late yet to take the action he indicated, and when a landlord desired to meet his crofters in a just and reasonable way, every possible assistance should be afforded.

As regarded fisheries, most of the trouble was caused by the depredation of the trawlers. That was a question on which the Secretary for Scotland might well reconsider the attitude he had taken up. It was, of course, difficult for the Congested Districts Board to increase the number of their fishing cruisers, which were admirably conducted; but the Secretary for Scotland ought to realise the importance of the question, and discourage trawlers which oftentimes were a perfect nuisance. The greatest trouble was not caused by the best class of trawler, but by the smaller boats in small bays and inshore. The evidence of the Commission was perfectly clear on that point, and showed that injury was inflicted on the line fishermen. In the winter time Shetland suffered very much from the difficulty of getting fish away; practically they could only do so once a week, and consequently prices were about one half in Shetland what they were in Aberdeen; and it would be a great advantage if the Secretary for Scotland were to urge this matter on the Post Office.

Mr. John Dewar.

He also wished to refer to the hard and fast line which was adopted in connection with the congested districts. There were certain districts in Orkney which were just too well off to come under the Congested Districts Board. In such cases the Board might well relax their rules, and allow the poorer parts of a parish to come under the Act. He would wish to attract the attention of hon. Gentlemen representing English constituencies to a paragraph in the Report of the Board which stated with reference to the Barra Settlement—

“We made arrangements in each township whereby the settlers by their own labour, and the provisions of materials by us, could erect a comfortable and sanitary dwelling and only be indebted to us in the sum of £30 each.”

In Scotland, therefore, poor people could have a fairly satisfactory house for £30, and a certain amount of labour. That showed what might be done in making these people comfortable. He should vote with his hon. friend the Member for Ross-shire if he proceeded to a division; but, at the same time, he wished to express his approval of the Report as far as it went. He wished to thank the Lord-Advocate and his predecessor for the encouragement they had given to fishing in Scotland. He referred to the experiments of applying motor power to fishing boats which, if successful, would be a great advantage to the fishing industry. A catch of herrings might be worth £100 in the morning, and worth practically nothing at night. He hoped the Congested Districts Board would bear that in mind. As regarded the Rackwick Road, the Answer of the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly satisfactory, and he was glad to know that the Congested Districts Board was no party to money being given into the hands of one individual. According to the Answer of the right hon. Gentleman, the road was not to be carried for a certain distance in order, solely, to suit the purposes of an individual. He desired to congratulate the Administration and the right hon. Gentleman on the manner in which the work of the Board had been carried on.

*MR. MUNRO FERGUSON (Leith Burghs) said he hoped the Lord-Advocate

would consider the question of closing the ports in England against fish caught by trawling in the Moray Frith. The discussion had no reality as long as the English ports were open to trawled fish from the prohibited areas. As regarded the Congested Districts Board, he did not altogether accept the eulogy of his hon. friend. He never thought that the Board worked well, or that it was well constituted. The policy of land redistribution did not appear to be thought out with reference as to whether small occupiers should be tenants under the State, the county council, or be the owners. He admitted it was a difficult point to decide; and he suggested that there should be a competent inquiry before the matter was definitely settled. The objection in parts of the Highlands to small ownerships was that a large class had not as yet much experience in the matter of fending for themselves; and as to whether this peasant proprietary would be a great success or whether some State control should not rather be retained he should not like to give an off-hand opinion. That was a matter which ought to be inquired into before it was proceeded with on a comprehensive scale. He laid stress on the matter because the land policy of the Congested Districts Board had not been sufficiently developed. That was the main function of the Board; and in respect to it they could not have too clear a policy, too strong an estate office, and a too competent directing committee. There were good members on the Board, but he did not think it commanded confidence; and, in his opinion, it was not working well. On the contrary, the Crofters Commission was working extremely well; and he would suggest an amalgamation between the two. The Crofters Commission had not enough work, and with slight changes could do the work of both authorities. As with the land policy to be pursued in the Highlands, so with the amalgamation of these two authorities; he thought there should be an inquiry; he believed the work would then be much better done, and they would have a land policy on a clear and comprehensive basis. He hoped the time was not far distant when the Scotch Office would see that matters should no longer be allowed to

drift, and would institute such an inquiry as he had suggested.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.): pointed out that there was a practical difficulty in the way of the suggested amalgamation of the Crofters Commission and the Congested Districts Board. It was convenient to have the two bodies separate, as questions sometimes arose between the Congested Districts Board as owners and the Crofters Commission as purchasers with regard to the price of holdings and so forth. The Crofters Commission dealt with other than congested districts, and in many respects there would be great difficulty in amalgamating the two bodies. The Congested Districts Board were the successors of the Highlands and Islands Works Board, which dealt with matters such as lighthouses, piers, and roads. For five years previous to the constitution of the Congested Districts Board the amount spent on those purposes averaged £26,000 per annum, but, as usually happened in such cases, when the Congested Districts Board was established and took over the work of the body that it superseded, the Treasury got the better of the Scotch Office, and the Highlands Works Vote was compounded for £20,000 a year. Additional powers were conferred on the Congested Districts Board for dealing with agriculture, land, and emigration, fishing, and one or two minor purposes, and £15,000 a year was added to the Vote. That money, however, was purely Scotch money, England having equivalent grants for English purposes.

There was considerable difficulty in following the work of the Board. He fully agreed that there was a total absence of policy. He had been carefully through the accounts endeavouring to find some sort of policy, and though, after devoting considerable time to the work, he had obtained some idea of what had been done by the Board, he had been unable to gain any notion whatever as to what the Board had intended to do. As regarded the land scheme and money from the Congested Districts Board, there had been expended altogether about £250,000, of which Inverness had had £148,000, Sutherland £23,745, and Ross-shire £17,000. But for

the settlement of crofters and so forth, Inverness had had only £128, and Ross-shire £1,239. The main object of the Congested Districts Board was to deal with the poverty of the people, and not so much with piers and harbours, except so far as they might alleviate the poverty of the people. When they looked round the other congested districts, so far as the crofters were concerned nothing was being done. Argyllshire had had the sum of £35 9s. 6d. He wished to know what was the policy that the Congested Districts Board were seeking to carry out. Were they paying large sums for roads and bridges? For lighthouses and piers (including roads) the amount was £6,900 not long ago, but in 1903 it had risen to £15,000, in 1904 it was £10,000, and in 1905 £14,000; and the average was about £8,000 or £9,000 throughout the whole of that period.

There were several ways in which they might settle crofters on the land. They might, as in Ireland, sell the land to the crofters under a purchase scheme, the amount advanced being repayable in fifty years. In the case of Barra, the land was purchased and divided amongst certain crofters, and they had to build houses. It was pointed out in the Report that these crofters at Barra were not fulfilling their contracts or making their payments, but there could be no question whatever as to the advantage of buying land and migrating crofters upon it, and this plan had produced the best possible results. So great was the change made under this system that a clergyman who visited one of these islands after a long absence could scarcely believe that it was the same place owing to the improvements which had been made by creating large holdings and dividing the land vacated amongst the people, making their holdings larger. In this way they were able to create new holdings, and at the same time give larger holdings to those who needed them. This was the policy which ought to be favoured in the congested districts, because what the people suffered from in those districts was that their crofts were too small. The great point was to give them more land in order that they might utilise their labour and industry to the

Mr. Munro Ferguson.

full, and in that way make it pay. There were varying circumstances in different districts, and they ought to deal with each district by itself. So far as this system of creating new holdings and adding more land to existing crofts had been carried out, the best possible results had followed.

Hitherto very little had been done in the way of land purchase because the balances had been allowed to accumulate. In the past they had complained that £35,000 a year was far too small a sum for this purpose. He wished to point out that they were not spending even that small amount, because they were allowing it to accumulate, with the result that last year it amounted to no less than £120,000. Was it intended by this accumulation to start a land scheme? A purchase was made in Glendale for £15,000, and to this was added £5,000 for roads, fencing, and buildings, making up the total to £20,000. They had been endeavouring to sell that land to the crofters, and attempts had been made to arrange terms and a fair price to be paid by the crofters. When those terms were settled they would like to know what was the policy of the Board in regard to this matter. Were they going to sell the land to the crofters out and out? Were they to purchase from the Loan Commissioners, and would the money be refunded to the Congested Districts Board in order that they might extend crofts in other districts? Were they going to keep the land in their own hands for fifty years, charging a certain amount of principal and interest annually with a view to the advance being paid automatically? The money which had been accumulated was intended for the benefit of the people of to-day, and not for the future. To accumulate the money in this way was contrary to all precedents. Surely they ought to know what was to become of this money in the future. The balance now was £13,000, but that would not go very far in the way of making roads and developing estates. Having become owner of a large property with a great number of tenants, the Board had appointed Lady Cathcart's factor to manage the estate.

It was a very remarkable thing that the purchase of the two tracts of land took

place about the same time and that Parliament should know nothing about the transactions until they were completed. One tract was purchased in November and the other in January following with the money belonging to the Congested Districts Board. What was the policy in connection with these purchases? What were the Government aiming at? Having purchased that land how were they to have money available for the purpose of relieving distress in other districts besides the Island of Skye? The Board seemed to think that they had too much money on their hands, and they wished additional powers so as to introduce new purposes on which to utilise the money. The Government themselves had laid great stress on the importance of making the crofters the owners of their holdings, and surely that must be because they believed it was the proper policy with the view of relieving congestion in the Highlands. If that was good policy for relieving congestion in the Island of Skye it was good policy for the Island of Lewis. Would any man who knew the facts say that the Island of Lewis was not more congested than the Island of Skye? Why had Skye been dealt with in this way? When the Government wanted powers to deal with a matter of this kind the case of the poorest class was brought forward to prove the necessity for their being granted, but when the powers were obtained that class was neglected altogether. Nothing could illustrate that better than the fact that £20,000 had been expended in the Island of Skye, though the people of the Island of Lewis were crying out for assistance.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh, when Secretary for Scotland, got a Committee appointed with the view of seeing what could be done with regard to any special relief to the congested districts. One of the matters which the Committee were to inquire into was the fisheries; and another point was the insufficiency of educational facilities, and especially the difficulties under which the people of the Island of Lewis suffered from having too limited a knowledge of the outer world. These were matters within the scope of the work

of the Congested Districts Board. Technical education was also included in the powers which the Board had just now. He could not understand why more powers were wanted to deal with these questions. As a matter of fact the Board had powers to act at present without waiting to get a Bill passed. He had shown, at any rate, that where the creation of new crofter holdings was concerned they had only touched the fringe of the question, and that the extent to which money had been lavished in the Island of Skye only served to illustrate the poverty in regard to the other districts. There were other moneys which were at the control of the Secretary for Scotland, practically without any legislation at all. There was, as the Lord-Advocate knew, the general aid grant. That money was not set aside for education in any way. It amounted to £223,000, and the Secretary for Scotland by a Minute of his own appropriated half of it for certain purposes. If he could appropriate it for one purpose he could appropriate it for other purposes in the same way. The hon. Member did not say that it was legal for the Secretary for Scotland to appropriate the money, but it had been done. The £223,000 came to Scotland not because Scotland wanted or needed the money, but simply because England had got a certain amount owing to the passing of the Education Act which threw a heavy burden on the ratepayers. As England dipped into the Imperial purse in that way Scotland had to take the equivalent. The policy in every case in regard to the equivalent grant had been to apply the money to purposes most useful for the people of Scotland as a whole. Surely no one would say that the crofters and the Congested Districts Board should not practically get any of it.

There was no objection whatever to the Congested Districts Board getting enlarged powers, but additional money must be got if the powers were to be enlarged. It was obvious to everyone who studied the work of the Congested Districts Board that the money available in their hands was too little for their present purposes if they were to carry out the Act in a proper spirit. The truth of the

matter was that in Scotland they got more money than they could utilise. The ratepayers were jumping for it, the schoolmasters were jumping for it. Really money was thrown at them which they were unable to utilise. Grants-in-aid were wrong in principle; but if they were to be given they should be applied to some useful purpose. The money granted to the Congested Districts Board was insufficient to carry on the schemes for the development of the Highlands and Islands. The members of the Board were, no doubt, excellent gentlemen, but they did not give that time and attention necessary for the understanding of all matters relating to the administration of Scotland. He himself had endeavoured to go through all the accounts, but it was almost impossible to understand them. He was quite certain that the Lord-Advocate would have no objection to give full information in regard to all these matters in a way that the ordinary man could understand them. He agreed with the hon. Member for Inverness that the crofters should be tenants under the Crofters Act, paying rent, rather than peasant proprietors.

*MR. LEVESON-GOWER (Sutherland) thought that the responsibilities which the Congested Districts Board were taking upon themselves were greater than they could bear. They would, in fact, in course of time, if they went on purchasing estates as they were doing, become proprietors of large tracts of land, and their resources would be absorbed in these properties to such an extent that they would have no money to spend in other directions. He would suggest to the Lord-Advocate that the Scottish Office should endeavour to get a certain proportion of the purchase price paid for the land from the Treasury. The Board would be able to pay a very fair interest on the sums thus borrowed from the revenue they derived from the rents, and they would thus not be out of pocket as they were at the present time. Unless this was done, if the purchase of land continued, the Congested Districts Board in a very few years would have nothing at all left. He could not see why there should be a differentiation between

the Crofter Commission's rents and the Congested Districts Board's tenant proprietor rents.

CAPTAIN ELLICE (St. Andrews Burghs) said that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid.-Lanark said that money had been thrown to Scotland in relation to the Congested Districts Board which had been practically wasted. But he would like to point out that there were in Scotland industries other than that of crofting which had not had money thrown at them of recent years. He referred to the Scottish Fisheries Board, which had only the same grant as they had had for the past forty years—a grant of £3,000 a year. He had not the slightest doubt that the Scottish Fisheries Board would benefit largely in their operations by an increased grant. The Vote he particularly desired to call attention to was the Vote of £3,000 towards piers and harbours.

THE CHAIRMAN: That will come on the next Vote; it is not on this Vote at all.

CAPTAIN ELLICE said in that case he would defer what he had to say to another occasion.

*MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire) said the discussion which had taken place had shown the great importance of this question, not only to the Highlands of Scotland, but to the whole of the United Kingdom, because it dealt with one of the most valuable races of the population of the Empire. He hoped the discussion would enable the Government to make clear first what their policy was going to be in relation to the land question; second, by what machinery they would carry out that policy; and third, the amount of the fund they were prepared to provide in order to carry it out. He assumed they would carry out the policy of land purchase in the manner which was most acceptable to the people of Scotland; that was to say, by a system of having an occupier with a fixed tenancy under a superior. The machinery that at present existed for carrying out that policy consisted of two boards, the Crofters Commission and the Congested Districts Board, both of

which had done a great deal of good work. In his opinion, however, the work would be much simplified if those two bodies were united, with the members as paid officials amenable to this House and the country. When they came to the funds for carrying out this policy it was almost laughable to find that for various purposes which were always being added to the e was only £36,000 altogether. He hoped the Lord-Advocate would be able to tell the Committee that more money would be provided. One way in which the right hon. Gentleman could provide money almost immediately for land purchase, without at once troubling the Treasury, would be by taking powers to raise money on the land which the Congested Districts Board had already purchased, and using that for further purchases.

He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able also to tell the Committee something in respect to a small increase in the powers of the Congested Districts Board, which would be of great importance to the people of the Highlands. He alluded to the power of advancing small sums to crofters for the purpose of improving their holdings. In the past the crofter in case of emergency was in the habit of going to his landlord. But the conditions were now different, and if he went to his landlord for £30, £40, or £50 for the purpose of rebuilding his house or otherwise improving his holding, his landlord would say, "The conditions are quite different now to what they were, and if you want me to lend you money you must give up your crofting holding, and become a leaseholder." The result of that was that men desirous of improving their holdings became leaseholders and found the conditions of their holding entirely changed. They had here also an opportunity of dealing with the question of rural depopulation at once, because it was not a question of bringing about a new state of things, but preserving the state of things which at present existed. Could anyone say he was willing to contemplate the probability of a large proportion of the Highlands of Scotland becoming a deer forest? Yet that was the question to-day in many parts of Scotland: "How many deer will the land

carry?" Here was an opportunity of giving the proprietor a chance of getting rid of the crofting area; an opportunity of giving the crofter a superior landlord, in the shape of a public board, who was able to spend money on the improvement of the croft; and an opportunity of preserving one of the finest races of the population of the Empire. He asked the Lord-Advocate to bear in mind the difference between a family brought up in the glens of Highlands and on the shores of the lochs, and a family brought up ever on high wages in the big towns. If the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to proceed with these reforms he would not only benefit the country but the Empire.

THE LORD-ADVOCATE (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton) said he did not complain of what had been said on this important Vote nor of the manner in which it had been discussed. All those who had spoken had recognised that the Congested Districts Board had had a record year of progress and development. As to the Secretary for Scotland not being in attendance, that was due to important public duties. He did not think any one could complain that this Government had been unmindful of the claims of the House of Commons so far as the Secretary of Scotland was concerned, although he did not agree that it should be set policy that the Secretary for Scotland should always have a seat in this House. In fact, it was admitted that one of the best Secretaries Scotland ever had, sat in another place. He was rather surprised that the policy of the Congested Districts Board in increasing balances in hand should be regarded as a new development. It had been pursued for a number of years, and it had been long understood and stated in this House that these accumulations had been for the purpose of acquiring land to carry out a scheme of migration on an adequate scale. It was well to recollect that the Congested Districts Board had no means of purchasing property other than from the £35,000 from the local taxation accounts, and the £20,000 voted by Parliament. It was generally accepted that there would be some large demands upon the balances accumulating for the settlement on a

large scale of crofters and cottars who would be migrated from one district to another. That policy so enumerated had never been taken exception to. Complaints had been made that the land was not bought, but it was never suggested that the accumulation of balances was not a perfectly proper thing for the purpose of acquiring land. All that the Board required was to get suitable land. The first opportunity occurred in Skye, where the estates of Kilmuir and Glendale were acquired. Every branch of the policy as to how the land was to be disposed of was set out in last year's Report, again without any complaint or objection being taken. The Report stated—

"The proposal we have made" (that was in dealing with the Glendale Estate) "is that the Board should sell to each existing tenant the holding he at present possesses and also a share in the grazing, the land to be held by the settlers on the club farm system."

It was stated that the price payable by the purchasers would fall to be met by an annuity calculated to repay the principal and interest of the capital value of each purchaser's interest in thirty years, the rate of interest being $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent., and the Report continued—

"We may add very many, if not all, the tenants are willing to be purchasers."

That had been the declared policy of the Congested Districts Board for some years. It must have been obvious to those who took an interest in the matter that the balances were accumulating for the very purpose of acquiring land and reselling it when acquired on the annuity principle. The only reason why that plan was not carried out sooner was that suitable land did not come into the market. The propriety of the policy seemed to him to be justified by the very statement of it; because, if it were desirable to make provision for the migration and settlement of a crofting population, surely in no better way could it be carried out than by securing considerable tracts of land where there could be a large settlement and the thing would have a chance of being tried on a proper scale. If it were found, as he believed it would be, that this experiment was successful, he had no doubt money would be found for further experiments of the same kind. The fact that they had really made a start in actual practical demonstration

tended to make the year a memorable one in the history of the Congested Districts Board.

A suggestion had been made that there should be an amalgamation of the Crofters Commission and the Congested Districts Board, but there were two sides to that question, and he did not know that any advantage would be derived from combining those two bodies. There was no jealousy or want of desire to co-operate between the two bodies. The hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty objected to two estates being purchased in Inverness-shire, but the claims of Lewis had not been lost sight of. He regretted that so far as the training of boys in seamanship was concerned it had not been so successful as was anticipated. No effort had been spared to remove the prejudice which existed with regard to the matter, and it was hoped that with the diffusion of greater knowledge on the subject that prejudice would disappear, and that considerable numbers would adopt a seafaring life, which it was believed was admirably adapted for giving lads from island districts a better opening in life than they had hitherto. With regard to the building of houses, while he agreed that the progress had not been as rapid as could have been wished, yet considerable progress had been made, and was still going on. The Congested Districts Board had shown their desire to go even further than their present powers allowed, as more than once since the issue of the Report to which reference had been made they had introduced Bills dealing with the subject, but had been unable to secure the co-operation of the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark. But doubtless the influence of the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland would remove the difficulty the hon. Member had hitherto felt on the subject, and enable the Board to have the matter dealt with.

Reference had been made to the Mansfield Commission. So far as the work of that Commission was concerned, there was no desire whatever, if it could have been satisfactorily proceeded with, to prevent the Commissioners from inquiring into the details of the fishing in Lewis and elsewhere, but it was felt that it would tend to delay the

investigation they were making without securing any corresponding advantage. Though the Commissioners were confined by the terms of their reference to the counties of Sutherland and Caithness, to a large extent their observations were general in character, and he could not doubt that any remedial legislation which might follow that Report would not be confined to the two counties named, but, with suitable changes, would be extended to other districts. In that way the refusal to extend the scope of the reference would in the end turn out to the advantage of the district in which the hon. Member was interested.

Another question to which reference had been made—and its importance he fully recognised—was that of the foreign trawlers in the Moray Firth. That question was looked at from very different standpoints, according to the interests concerned. In the North of Scotland, and probably in Scotland generally, they looked at it from the line fisherman's point of view, but South of the Tweed the question was regarded rather from the trawler's point of view, and he doubted whether any proposal to close British ports to trawlers might not raise a branch of that very thorny question, the fiscal problem, and whether they might not be charged with all kinds of fiscal heresies.

*MR. CATHCART WASON: Could you not stop the sale of illegally trawled fish in English ports?

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON asked whether, in order to avoid the importation of the fiscal question, it would not be fair to say that the restrictions with regard to the Moray Firth were laid down rather to secure a supply of fish than to act on behalf of line fishermen as against trawlers.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON did not desire to be taken as not having that course quite in view, but even there serious difference of opinion existed as to the probable result. The question had engaged the attention of those concerned with the interests of Scotland for a considerable time, and was still engaging their attention, to see whether anything could be done

to put the matter on a more satisfactory basis. He entirely agreed, as the matter stood, that it was not satisfactory that British trawlers should be kept out of the Moray Firth whilst all the others had to do was to hoist the Norwegian flag to be free of the restrictions. The matter, however, was not one which could be dealt with without legislation.

*MR. WEIR suggested that the Foreign Secretary could approach the other Powers on the subject without legislation.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said that in any case Norway was not bound by the Convention, and even with regard to foreign Powers that were so bound serious difficulties arose as to the extent of territorial waters and so forth. The question had not been lost sight of, but it was by no means an easy matter to deal with.

MR. JOHN DEWAR suggested that they might prevent the sale of fish caught by foreign trawlers.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said that question was discussed some time ago, but the debate had not proceeded far before it was vehemently protested that it was sheer protection and would prevent the importation of a large amount of fish for the food supply of the people of this country.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) asked by whom that argument was put forward

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said that was immaterial. He was simply showing the kind of argument they were met with. Then as to the use of motors in fishing boats, experiments had been going on, and he understood that Members would have an opportunity of seeing the application of the motor principle in the way suggested, as a fishing boat fitted with a motor was leaving Anstruther for the Thames on Saturday next. Comparisons had been made between Scotland and Ireland in the matter of facilities for curing. It had to be remembered, however, that the position of Scotland was very different from that of Ireland, inasmuch as the fishing in-

dustory had practically to be created in many parts of Ireland, whereas in Scotland it had been long established. In fact, wherever curing could be carried on in Scotland with any degree of success the places were occupied by private traders, so that the only result of the Congested Districts Board engaging in the work would be to open up places where the business could not be carried on either satisfactorily or successfully. The provision of increased steamer accommodation for the carrying of fish was a matter not for the Congested Districts Board but for the postal authorities.

MR. JOHN DEWAR said his suggestion had reference rather to a rearrangement of the present steamer service.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON: Belonging to the Congested Districts Board?

MR. JOHN DEWAR: No; the ordinary steamer service. The Board might also use their influence with regard to the new railway to Mallaig.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said that in many respects that line had not come up to anticipations. The Board would be only too glad if it could facilitate a rearrangement that would secure any improvement in the carrying trade. With reference to the complaint of the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark that the money spent on roads, improvement of stock, and similar purposes, was simply in the interests of the landlords, he would remind the hon. Member that the crofters were to a large extent landlords, and there were few better ways of bettering the condition of the people in these districts than by improving the means of access to the land they occupied and upon which they reared their stock and other marketable commodities. In these directions the Board had done and would continue to do much good work, and he believed that such measures were calculated to do more to improve the condition of the population than even migrating the people to other parts. If better road accommodation were provided and improvement of stock took place surely that must be beneficial. The efforts which they had made in that

Mr. Scott Dickson.

direction had certainly met with commendation in some quarters. With regard to the two estates of Kilmuir and Glendale he would explain how they proposed to deal with them. They were going to use them not only for the enlargement of existing crofts but also for planting new crofts. Their policy would be to create new holdings and utilise the holdings given up to increase the size of those adjoining. The Congested Districts Board were satisfied that by carrying out a policy of this kind a great deal of good would be done by promoting the formation of new settlements.

AN HON. MEMBER said he noticed that the period of repayment was fifty years at £3 14s. 1d. per cent., whereas the Irish tenant was allowed sixty-eight years at 3½ per cent.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said he was aware that there had been a good deal of controversy as to the length of the period of repayment, but he was not able to give a full explanation at the present moment. He did not pretend that he had dealt with all the points raised, but he thought he had dealt with the main points and he had indicated generally the policy which the Government had adopted and which they proposed to carry out. This policy had not been initiated this year for the first time, and the House had had ample notice of it. In all its details it was a policy which, so far as criticism was concerned, had not been seriously assailed as being open to objection. He quite understood that ultimately the success or non-success of this policy would be the test as to whether it was a wise one to continue, but as matters stood at present he was of opinion that this policy had been wisely conceived and the efforts made to carry it out were well calculated to secure its success. He thought the efforts of the Congested Districts Board were such as to deserve the commendation which they had received from hon. Members opposite, and the Board deserved every credit for the good work they had done.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) complained that there had been great delay in the Congested Districts Board addressing itself to the work com-

mitted to it by Parliament. He was glad that that delay had to some extent been abated during the past year. It seemed to him that although this Board had been created for one particular purpose it was always trying to devote itself to another purpose. Every one of the Reports of this Board generally gave a short account of what they had done, and a protracted Report of how they had been prevented from doing something else. The Congested Districts Board and the members of the Crofters Commission seldom, if ever, met round one table. If the Secretary for Scotland would call them together, and invite them to consider their relations to other public boards in the country, he would be doing an enormous national service. With regard to the educational difficulty he could hardly doubt that had the matter been fully understood at the time a couple of clauses would have been inserted in the Education Bill. The importance of this point was that whereas they were entitled to certain moneys for educational purposes those moneys were going to be abstracted from them in a different way altogether, and they were to lose an educational grant; in fact, they were to get a sum of money instead from the Congested Districts Board which would be taken out of funds to which Scotland was entitled from other sources. There was a financial loss as well as an administrative loss year after year. This was very well illustrated by the case of the Island of Lewis. Lord Balfour took this matter up and said that he asked for a Report mainly because he could not help feeling that the problems which pressed for solution in regard to Lewis were more difficult and complicated than in any other area with which the Congested Districts Board had to deal. That Report was made on December 15th, 1902, but nothing had been done, and these delays were aggravating the state of things in Lewis, and a good deal of misery and suffering was being continued in that island.

Now if there was any occasion upon which they could avoid bringing in the fiscal question he should have thought it would have been a discussion on the Congested Districts Board for Scotland,

but it seemed that the fiscal question was always with them, and even the Lord-Advocate had referred to it in connection with the Moray Firth trawling. There was a doctrine known as colonial preference, and he thought that in regard to trawling in the Moray Firth they might fairly claim that Scotsmen should be preferred. The Sea Fisheries Report, recently issued, stated that the effect of the continual disturbance by trawlers in the Moray Firth was to destroy the mature fish of all kinds, break up the shoals of herring and drive them from their accustomed haunts. That was a matter of national concern. Scotch fishermen were forbidden to go outside the limit, whilst Englishmen and foreigners were not subjected to this restriction. The Lord-Advocate asked—How could they help it? The answer was perfectly simple. Why could not the Congested Districts Board, the Secretary for Scotland, and the various boards act in co-operation with the authorities in England, because the moment they deprived either English or foreign trawlers of an English market for their goods they put an end to this nefarious traffic. All that was required was co-operation with the other public boards in England to prevent the landing not of foreign articles, but of fish procured in a region where it was unlawful for Scotsmen to fish. His right hon. friend said that under the North Sea Convention they could not appeal to Norway because that country was not a party to that Convention. Surely they could prevent, say, a Scandinavian vessel, just as they could an English vessel, landing a cargo illicitly caught and bringing it to a British port. One word to that effect from the British Government to the North Sea Powers would make such an arrangement feasible. After all, the main object of all those boards—the Congested Districts Board; Crofters Commission, and others—was to get bigger scope, and a wider sphere, for the energy of the people themselves.

He found, with regard to the acquisition of land, that the Congested Districts Board in all its askings for additional powers had been careful never to ask for power compulsorily to acquire land. The effect of such a power would be that the board

would be able to procure land at the market price and secure a wider area of selection for its activities, because they knew where the congestion was most acute, and instead of being driven from island to island, and from pillar to post, looking out for a property where the proprietor was anxious to acquire money for it, they would be able to get land where it was wanted. Until compulsory powers were obtained, the Congested Districts Board, or the authority which succeeded it, would be so shackled that it would be prevented from making much progress. The people were anxious that the little nagging restrictions to which the crofter was subject should be removed. The best type of population, particularly on the north-west coast of the mainland, or in the Hebrides, were the men who had a trade of their own, say, fishing, a little merchant's shop in addition; and also a little bit of land to till. That was the kind of citizen who was useful in the locality; he sat on the school board, took part in parish council work, and was a credit to the community. The House would hardly believe it, but it was a fact that by the decision of a Court of law that type of man had been absolutely disqualified under the Act from taking his position as a crofter. From the time that decision was given nothing had been done to alleviate that grievance. And so in all those respects he found fault with the Congested Districts Board, for its operations were always too slow; secondly, they were always asking for things which they did not require, and which were entrusted to other departments; thirdly, they never asked for the real thing, which was power to compulsorily acquire land; and lastly, they seemed to neglect cases of the kind which were dealt with in the action by Gilmour against Peterson to which he had referred. They neglected those strong and clamant cases, and came forward year after year with complaints about little petty matters which, as compared with the acquisition of land, were mere specks. Therefore, his complaint against them was delay, lack of due firmness and determination, and not knowing their own mind. They proceeded by circuitous methods, and the result was a certain ineffectiveness which, with much that he approved of in the

action of the Board, was highly to be regretted.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said the hon. and learned Member closed his speech by expressing disapproval of a certain action of the Congested Districts Board, though he had found a source of satisfaction in the fact that they had acquired a considerable property for which they paid a large sum of money. The House would accept that as substantial evidence of a very practical character of the efforts which were being made to solve some of the problems which were pressing themselves on the consideration of the Congested District Boards. The hon. and learned Member had told the House that there would be no satisfactory administration of the Act until land could be bought compulsorily. Why was it possible to purchase the great estate they had been discussing? It had been because the Congested Districts Board had the good sense to accumulate the capital which they had now used for the purchase of the property.

MR. THOMAS SHAW said he made no adverse comment on the accumulation of capital by the Board. His point was that under the present system they were forced to accumulate capital because they had not compulsory powers which would enable them to go on smoothly. They had to wait from year to year until they got the opportunity of buying from somebody who was willing to sell.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW said the point which the hon. and learned Member laid down was that the Board would not be able to do their work until they had compulsory powers of purchase, and he suggested that if such powers were in force they would be able to purchase land at what he called the market price. He thought the hon. and learned Member would bear him out when he said that if all rumours were true the exercise of compulsory powers in regard to the purchase of land was never of so felicitous a nature as to make one prefer that method if land could be acquired without putting compulsory powers in force at all.

MR. JOHN DEWAR: Land was taken by the Crofters Commission, and the price was fixed by the Commission itself.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW said that was a very special case. He did not believe the conferring of compulsory powers on the Congested Districts Board would make the slightest difference. He believed there was a great deal of land in the North of Scotland which the proprietors would be very glad to sell if there was any reasonable prospect or chance of selling it. He was perfectly certain that land could be bought more cheaply by the ordinary chance of the market than by putting compulsory powers into the hands of the Board.

THE CHAIRMAN: I desire to call attention to the fact that land cannot be acquired by compulsion without an Act of Parliament, and therefore the discussion of that is out of order.

MR. ASHER (Elgin Burghs) said he desired to make a few remarks on the subject of trawling for fish, in regard to which a great deal of interest was felt in the part of Scotland with which he was connected. He rose chiefly for the purpose of pressing on the attention of the Lord-Advocate a suggestion which might be successful in remedying the mischief which was at present occurring. His right hon. and learned friend acknowledged that the present state of matters was most unsatisfactory. At this moment so-called foreign vessels, but very largely manned by British subjects, were roaming at large outside territorial waters and catching fish, which they immediately transferred to British ports where they were sold. It had been suggested that any attempt to stop that process would be in the nature of protection, but he himself could not see that. The closing of the Moray Firth was authorised in 1889 for the purpose of enabling the Fishery Board of Scotland to make certain experiments; but the effect of those experiments had been absolutely frustrated by the action of these foreign trawlers. Whilst statistics were being collected the foreign trawlers appeared on the scene, and it was found impracticable to carry out the experiments for the purpose of

which the Act of 1889 was passed. He suggested that steps should be taken for treating foreign trawlers who landed fish in England in exactly the same way as they were treated in Scotland. His complaint was that it was the duty of the Government to enforce a British statute just as much in England as in Scotland. In 1897 a ship carrying the German flag, and registered in Germany, trawled for fish outside territorial waters in the Moray Firth. The Secretary for Scotland gave instructions to the Commander of the "Jackal" at Aberdeen and a fishery officer to prevent the landing of the fish, and the fish were not allowed to be landed. Immediately after that the foreign owner of the vessel came into the Scottish Court and asked for redress for what would be called in England an injunction against anything being done which would prevent the fish being landed at Aberdeen. The case was defended by the then Secretary for Scotland, who, in his pleadings, stated that no British subject was entitled to take fish by steam trawling in the Moray Firth, or to land the same in Scotland—

"And it will be seriously prejudicial to the national interests and to the said fisheries and the British subjects interested therein, if foreign trawlers are allowed to land such fish in Scotland."

It was also set out in the pleadings that—

"The Government resolved in the interest of the State, and as an act of State"

that fish caught by beam or other trawling should not be allowed to be landed in Scotland. The Court decided that His Majesty's Government acted absolutely within their rights in doing what they did; and as that judgment was not appealed against, it had been accepted from that time as the law of Scotland that the foreign trawler was not entitled to land his fish in a Scotch port. What he would suggest to his right hon. and learned friend was that His Majesty's Government should instruct their officers in England not to allow any fish trawled in the Moray Firth to be landed in any English port, and to institute proceedings against any foreign trawlers doing so.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said that the Secretary for Scotland could not issue

Mr. Asher.

any such instructions as far as English ports were concerned. What was done in the case referred to by the hon. and learned Member opposite was done by the Secretary for Scotland acting in Scotland, but he could not do that in England.

MR. ASHER said he would remind his hon. and learned friend that in the pleadings in the Scotch Court the Secretary for Scotland recited that he was a member of His Majesty's Government, and that "the Government resolved in the interest of the State, and as an act of State," that fish trawled in the Moray Firth should not be allowed to be landed. He was not suggesting legislation; what he was suggesting was that the Secretary for Scotland should go to his colleagues in the Government and ask them, "as an act of State," to prevent fish which were trawled against the law in the Moray Firth being landed in the ports of England. It was absolutely in the power of the Executive to prevent an alien entering British ports and landing fish which had been caught in violation of British law. What was taking place was so grievous an evil that it ought to be taken up and grappled with. There was an enormous population all along the coast of the Moray Firth on the verge of rebellion in consequence of what was happening, and why should not the Secretary for Scotland secure that the British Government should, "as an act of State," intervene for the purpose of preventing these illegally trawled fish being landed in English ports. He strongly urged on his hon. and learned friend to take the course which he had suggested. Of course, legislation was out of the question; and he agreed with his hon. and learned friend the Member for the Border Burghs that negotiation was also out of the question. If the Government instructed its officers at English ports not to allow fish illegally trawled to be landed at these ports nothing more would be heard of the matter.

MR. BLACK said that the reply of the Lord Advocate would occasion great disappointment. The question was a very burning one all along the coast; and affected the livelihood of

many men. It was a matter of wonder to many of them that for ten or twelve years the Government should have done nothing to grapple with this evil. There were from thirty to forty trawlers in these waters; and yet the Government said they could do nothing. Perhaps they should not have expected anything better from such a quarter. But who were the supporters of the Lord-Advocate which he said he could not offend. These trawlers were practically pirates. They went to foreign countries, registered their vessels there, and then, under a foreign flag, came into the waters of the Moray Firth and broke the domestic law which governed trawling in those waters. If the Government were in earnest they would be able to deal with this matter, and, somehow or another, bring about a remedy. He was surprised that the Lord-Advocate should have endeavoured to stop his hon. and learned friend when he made a practical suggestion to deal with this matter. It was done openly; and, surely, if the Government were in earnest they could grapple with it. There was certainly a lack of earnestness on the part of the Government in providing a remedy.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigtonshire) said he desired to support the views of the two hon. Members who had just spoken on the other side. He could not help thinking that the Lord-Advocate was not aware of the extent and depth of feeling which the existing state of things had created. Had it not been that his countrymen were of a practical and orderly disposition there would have been more serious scenes on the coast of Scotland than had been witnessed. The operations of these trawlers were carried on, not only during the day, but at night, when it was almost impossible for any human being to prevent them from violating the three-mile limit. It was a very common belief of the fishermen, especially in the Moray Firth, that that limit was habitually violated by these foreign trawlers. He could not conceive a more inequitable state of things than that which prohibited trawled fish being sold in Scotland, and yet permitted it to be sold in another part of the United Kingdom. He begged the right hon.

Gentleman to take this matter into serious consideration and use his influence with the Government so that some such action as had been suggested by the hon. and learned Member for the Elgin Burghs might be taken.

MR. DOBBIE (Ayr Burghs) said that his hon. and learned friend the Member for the Elgin Burghs had suggested a remedy which ought to appeal to the Lord-Advocate. The trawling grievance was felt equally, and even in a magnified form, in the Firth of Clyde as in the Moray Firth. They were troubled with trawlers not only from Norway but from Germany and Holland, and he appealed to the Lord-Advocate to make some representation to those countries with a view to getting the evil remedied by a convention or otherwise. Trawling was the great cause of the depression and congestion of the fishing population. The Report of the Departmental Committee was very valuable; but localities other than Sutherland and Caithness should also be considered. It was quite true that the recommendations of the Committee were general; but there were varying conditions in different localities. He, therefore, thought that the Government would confer a great boon on the fishing community in Scotland if they endowed the Committee with further powers. He hoped, from the excellent tone of the speech of the Lord-Advocate, that some attention would be given to this matter.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.) complained of the absolute apathy displayed by the Secretary for Scotland. It was, he asserted, nothing more nor less than a scandal for the Scotch representatives to treat with contempt, silence, and indifference the complaints that had been made respecting trawling and harbour dues. So long as the present state of affairs continued they had every right to consider that the Scottish officers were grossly negligent of their duty, which was first of all to protect Scottish interests and then to see that justice was done to British interests. He thought that probably in view of the approaching election and of the strong feeling prevailing in Scotland, this discussion would have a little more effect than usual.

*Mr. WEIR saw no ray of hope in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, who had put before them roads, bulls, rams, cockerels, and bee-hives as a solution of the crofter problem. Those were all useful in their way, but what the people wanted was more land. It was because the Secretary for Scotland had shown no desire to secure land suitable to the wants

of the people that the reduction had been moved. He also failed to find a ray of hope for the settlement of the foreign trawlers question.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 87; Noes, 142. (Division List No. 203.)

AYES.

Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herb. Henry
Black, Alexander William
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, G. M. (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, N.E. (York, N.R., Whitby)
Caldwell, James
Campbell, J. (Armagh, S.)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cheetham, John Frederick
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Ellice, Capt. E. C. (S. And'ws B'ghs)
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
Flynn, James Christopher
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John

Goddard, Daniel Ford
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Levy, Maurice
Lundon, W.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
McCrae, George
Markham, Arthur Basil
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Mara, James

Parrott, William
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Russell, T. W.
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants)
Sullivan, Donal
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Tillet, Louis John
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wallace, Robert
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Mr. Weir and Mr. Ainsworth.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hn. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bailey James (Walworth)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manchester)
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harwood
Bartley, Sir George C. T.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry G.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bousfield, Wm. Robert

Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex)
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worcester)
Chamberlayne, T. (Southampton)
Chapman, Edward
Coates, Edward Feetham
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Gross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Gubbitt, Hor. Henry
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, Wm. Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred D.
Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers.
Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart

Egerton, Hn. A. de Tatton
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manchester)
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Fitch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inverness B'ghs)
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Flower, Sir Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury)
Greene, Sir E. W. (B'ry S. Edm'nds)
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hamilton, Marj. off (Lond'nderry)
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords., N.W.)
Heaton, John Henniker

Hermion-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hozier, Hn. James Henry C.
 Hudson, George Bickersteth
 Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
 Kerr, John
 Keswick, William
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Sir J. (Monmouth)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lee, Arthur H. (Hants., Fareham)
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N.S.
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt.Hn.Walter (Bristol, S.
 Lonsdale, John Brownlee
 Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
 Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
 M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire)
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
 Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
 Morrell, George Herbert

Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mount, William Arthur
 Muntz, Sir Philip A.
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Myers, William Henry
 O'Neill, Hn. Robert Torrens
 Percy, Earl
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Purvis Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Randles, John S.
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Renwick, George
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sackville, Col. S.G. Stopford
 Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
 Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Rerfrew)
 Sloan, Thomas Henry
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East

Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Spear, John Ward
 Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs)
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stock, James Henry
 Stroyan, John
 Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.)
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tuff, Charles
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
 Warde, Colonel C. E.
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R. (Bath)
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
 Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
 Alexander Acland - Hood
 and Viscount Valentia.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON said that as the answer of the Lord-Advocate was rather disappointing, both as regarded the working of the Board, and its constitution, and the holding of an inquiry into those matters, he should move a reduction of £500 in respect of the

grant in aid to the Congested Districts Board.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £10,133, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Munro Ferguson.*)

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 82; Noes, 140. (Division List No. 204.)

AYES.

Ainsworth, John Stirling
 Asher, Alexander
 Black, Alexander William
 Bright, Allan Heywood
 Brown, George M. (Edinburgh)
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burke, E. Hamilton
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, N.E. (York, NR, Whitby)
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
 Delany, William
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Dobbie, Joseph
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
 Ellice, Capt EC (S. Andr'ws B'ghs)
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
 Eve, Harry Trelawney
 Fenwick, Charles
 Findlay, Alex. (Lanark, N.E.)
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Griffith, Ellis J.
 Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill

Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
 Harmsworth, R. Leicester
 Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
 Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
 Higham, John Sharp
 Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
 Lamont, Norman
 Langley, Batty
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Levy, Maurice
 Lewis, John Herbert
 London, W.
 Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Crae, George
 M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
 Markham, Arthur Basil
 Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
 Murphy, John
 Nannetti, Joseph P.
 Nolan, Col John P. (Galway, N)
 O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, Jas (Wicklow, W)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Malley, William
 O'Mara, James

Parrott, William
 Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Russell, T. W.
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soares, Ernest J.
 Spencer, Rt. Hn. C.R. (Northants)
 Sullivan, Donal
 Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Villiers, Ernest Amherst
 Wallace, Robert
 Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
 Weir, James Galloway
 White, Luke (York, E.R.)
 Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
 Munro Ferguson and Mr.
 John Dewar.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
 Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
 Ailsopp, Hon. George

Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Arnold-Fortser, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
 Arrol, Sir William

Atkinson, Rt. Hn. John
 Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
 Bailey, James (Walsworth)

Bain, Colonel James Robert
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manc'r.
 Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds
 Banbury, Sir Frederick George
 Banner, John S. Harmood-
 Bartley, Sir George C. T.
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir Michael Hicks
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Bignold, Sir Arthur
 Bill, Charles
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bond, Edward
 Bousfield, William Robert
 Bowles, Lt.-Col. HF. (Middlesex
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
 Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
 Cautley, Henry Strother
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc.
 Chamberlayne, T. (S'thampton
 Chapman, Edward
 Coates, Edward Feetham
 Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coghlin, Douglas Harry
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
 Craig, Chas. Curtis (Antrim, S.
 Gross, Alexander (Glasgow)
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davenport, William Bromley
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred D.
 Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
 Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
 Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
 Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r
 Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
 Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
 Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'r'n'ss B'ghs
 Fisher, William Hayes

FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
 Flower, Sir Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gardner, Ernest
 Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
 Gordon, Hn. J. E. (Elgin & Nairn
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
 Greene, Sir EW. (B'ry SEDm'nds
 Guthrie, Walter Murray
 Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nerry
 Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
 Hay, Hon. Claude George
 Heath, Arthur H. (Hanley)
 Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords. N.W.
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
 Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
 Kerr, John
 Keswick, William
 Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lawrence, Sir J. (Monmouth)
 Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham
 Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
 Levesor-Gower, Frederick N.S.
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
 Lonsdale, John Brownlee
 Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'th
 Maconochie, A. W.
 McKillop, Jas. (Stirlingshire)
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir HE. (Wigt'n
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
 Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, James Archibald
 Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
 Mount, William Arthur
 Muntz, Sir Philip A.

Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Myers, William Henry
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Percy, Earl
 Pilkington, Colonel Richard
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymian, Ernest George
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, G. Guy
 Randles, John S.
 Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
 Renwick, George
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
 Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
 Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
 Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew
 Sloan, Thomas Henry
 Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
 Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Spear, John Ward
 Stanley, Rt. Hon. Lord (Lanes
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stock, James Henry
 Stoyan, John
 Strutt, Hn. Chas. Hedley
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tuff, Charles
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Turnour, Viscount
 Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
 Warde, Colonel G. E.
 Welby, Sir Chas. G. E. (Notts.)
 Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
 Wilson, John (Glasgow)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
 Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES — Sir
 Alexander Acland-Hood and
 Viscount Valentia.

Original Question, put and agreed to.

And, it being after half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again this evening.

— — — EVENING SITTING. — — —

SUPPLY [11TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N. R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE
 DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That a sum, not exceeding £9,905, be

granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board for Scotland (8 and 9 Vic., c. 83; 52 and 53 Vic., c. 50; 57 and 58 Vic., c. 58; 60 and 61 Vic., c. 38; and various other statutes)."

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross) said he moved to reduce this Vote because he did not think the Scottish Local Government Board had done what it ought and might have done with reference to the obtaining of allotments for all parts of Scotland. The Parish Councils Act for Scotland which was passed in 1894, and in which was incorporated the Allotment Act for

Scotland, gave power to parish councils to acquire land by agreement for the purposes of granting allotments. If they were unable to obtain land they had a right to call on the county councils to put the proper machinery in motion, if after inquiry they saw fit to do so, to ensure allotments being granted, and should the county council refuse to do so then they could call upon the Local Government Board for Scotland, which had power to acquire land compulsorily for the purpose of granting allotments. They had all hoped that the Parish Councils Act of 1894 would have changed the whole face of rural Scotland, but although there had been a great many applications for allotments he could not find from the Returns which had been granted to him in reference to this matter (and this it was to which he wished to direct particular attention) that the Local Government Board had put their compulsory powers into force in one single instance. Leaving out the crofting counties there was only one county in Scotland that had succeeded in obtaining allotments, the county of Wigtonshire. If the Act of 1894 had been administered sympathetically, and if the Local Government Board had done their duty and put pressure on the county councils, the allotments which were so much desired in Scotland would have been obtained, but nothing had been done and he moved the reduction which stood in his name upon the Paper in order to call attention to that fact. Everybody deplored the migration of the population to the towns, and he knew that in Ayrshire it would be almost impossible to get in the harvest now if it were not for the labour which came from Ireland. He hoped the Lord-Advocate would be able to give some explanation of the reasons why the Local Government Board had not done anything with regard to this matter. He begged to move that the Vote be reduced by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
 "That a sum, not exceeding £9,805, be granted for the said Service."—(Mr. Eugene Wason.)

Mr. MUNRO FERGUSON said the question raised by the hon. Member was

a very interesting one, and not less interesting because of the fact that the question of allotments in Scotland was rather different to that in this country. The farm servants of Scotland were not so accustomed to the use of allotments as they were in some parts of this country; but in the villages, at all events, there was a good opportunity for the utilisation of the soil in this way. If the Government really wished to extend allotments in Scotland they would have to approach the subject in various ways. In the first place some stimulus would have to be given to the people themselves to cultivate the soil in this manner. They were not so handy in the cultivation of small patches of soil as were the people of England, and would therefore have to be trained. An extraordinary variety of vegetables was grown in the allotment garden of this country, while the variety grown in Scotland was extremely limited. He believed a good deal might be done by instruction in the schools to turn the attention of people to the cultivation of small patches of land, thus giving them a healthy occupation and affording a stimulus for rural life. Then again, while some landlords were ready and willing to grant allotments voluntarily, others were indifferent and took no interest in the subject, and under those circumstances it was desirable that the local authorities should have some practical knowledge of how to act. They were not so able in Scotland to deal with questions of this kind as in England, owing to their having no knowledge, therefore he thought in connection with the Local Government Board and the Board of Agriculture experts should be available to give advice to local authorities in order to facilitate the carrying out of such a scheme as that to which his hon. friend had drawn attention. Many local authorities could not carry out the provisions of the Allotments or Small Holdings Act, because, from want of knowledge, they were not competent to do so. It was a very great pity to see the great farm system of agriculture brought up to the very houses of the towns and villages of Scotland without there being any attempt made to utilise the soil in those towns and villages in the shape of gardens and allotments. He did not think that the

Local Government Board had done much to help Scotland in that regard.

He complained that the constitution of the Local Government Board had not been kept up to date in order to meet the altered conditions of the times. In the matter of pollution of the air and water, for instance, the inspectorship was under the Scottish Office, and he contended that if the Local Government Board were to control the action of the local authorities with regard to pollution, they would be more directly concerned than they were at present with the administration of the Act. There were many aggravated cases of pollution which were very bad for public health, but the Local Government Board had no power to compel those responsible for that pollution to abate the nuisance. In point of fact, the Local Government Board was unable adequately to discharge its functions for want of sufficient powers. Some of the parish councils had suggested that the Local Government Board should convene an annual conference of the parish councils, and there was no doubt that that suggestion was a good one, as it would, if carried out, bring the Local Government Board into closer touch with the local authorities throughout Scotland, and would enable it to give useful information and guidance to the local authorities when they had to deal with large and pressing questions, such as the unemployed. He did not think that the Local Government Board was quite efficient in regard to the auditing of accounts. Allowances were sometimes given on their retirement from the public service to men who were not worthy of them. He mentioned this to show the necessity of a rigorous audit, and he thought it would be a great advantage if the auditing of the accounts of all local authorities was done under a thoroughly reliable system. He did not wish to enlarge upon this subject, but he could not help thinking that after education had been dealt with there was no question of greater interest than that of perfecting the control of local self-government. Most of the great authorities knew very little indeed about central control. There should be no longer any difficulty in attaching responsibility to proper persons in a case of a serious outbreak of

preventable disease, but that was where hitherto the central authority had failed. Although the right hon. Gentleman was not in favour of inquiry, he would venture to suggest once more that there was room for inquiry into the working of the Local Government Board in Scotland, and as to how it should be brought into closer relations with the different local authorities and made more efficient.

*MR. MACONCHIE (Aberdeenshire, E.) said he differed from the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark, who stated that they had more money in Scotland than they knew what to do with. Very few men over the border would agree with the hon. Member, for there were many parts of Scotland where they would be glad to have more money to expend for public purposes. The system followed in many parts of Scotland was for the farm worker to receive so much meal and potatoes from his employer, but he did not know that that was as satisfactory as the system of allotments in England, and he was sure that anything that could be done to promote the system of allotments in Scotland would be very much appreciated. As to the administration of the Poor Law, he maintained that it would bear comparison in Scotland with anything of the kind in England. He did not think any man in the House would stand up and say that there was any business in the country which could not be improved. No doubt the Local Government Board in Scotland could be improved, and he should be very proud if anything could be done to enable it to assist the people of Scotland, but if they expected to do it in a moment, without any notice whatever, he did not think they would be very successful in what they wanted to obtain. He did not know that in regard to the unemployed in Scotland there was very much to complain of. There was a certain amount of want of employment in some districts, but he did not think that was due to the action of the capitalists or the workmen. So far as the people in the North were concerned, the only thing they wanted was the opportunity of earning money. As to the question of consumption, he did not think it was disputed that that disease was infectious. In most localities infectious diseases

Mr. Munro Ferguson.

hospitals had been erected. If any English Member would take the trouble to visit Scotland and examine the methods of Poor Law administration and hospital management he would admit that for every twenty shillings expended the value of a sovereign was obtained. He did not think it was fair to twit the local bodies in Scotland with extravagance.

Mr. BLACK said that one result of the pressure brought to bear on the parish councils by the Local Government Board was that the number of paupers in the poorhouses had very much increased. In 1868 the total number of paupers in Scotland with their dependents was 130,441, and of these the total number in the poorhouses was 8,774. From a Blue-book recently published it appeared that the total number of paupers in 1904 was 91,240, and of these there were in the poorhouses 12,827. The children who were boarded out, and who for the purpose of comparison could not be reckoned as outdoor paupers, numbered 6,455, making the total number of indoor paupers 19,282. He agreed that excellent results were being obtained from the system of boarding out children. He would remind English Members that in Scotland there was no need to offer the house as a test of the *bona fides* of the applicants for relief because in that country a man, in order to be entitled to poor relief, must be either a lunatic, or over sixty-five years of age. What was the result of the continuous pressure brought to bear on the Poor Law authorities to put people in the house rather than give them relief outside? The test of a successful inspector of poor was that he should have no outdoor people at all, and that all paupers should be in the house. He knew of a case of a widow with four sons who was refused outdoor relief, and had to go into the house. How much better it would have been from the point of view of keeping the population on the land if that poor widow had been allowed to keep her own home and bring up her family! He was sure that cases of that kind could be multiplied throughout the country. Was it really wise policy that the present system should be continued? If that was true in regard to the ordinary

adult, it was doubly true in regard to the aged. This Government came into office in 1885 on a promise to give old-age pensions, but instead of fulfilling that promise they had pursued the system of forcing poor people into the house. It was lamentable that these old people should be forced into the house and compelled to stay there. It was a state of matters which was not creditable and the system ought to be revised. It was sometimes argued that the old people were better looked after in the house than they would be in their own homes. But, after all, that was a matter for the poor people themselves. He was not putting forward the statement that they were not well cared for in the poorhouse, but if they preferred to stay outside why should not arrangements be made which would enable them to do so? While indoor paupers cost £9 9s. 2d, outdoor relief only cost £6 11s. per head, so that neither economy nor goodness of heart was on the side of the Local Government Board.

*SIR HUGH SHAW-STEWART (Renfrew, E.) said he did not think the mover or the seconder of the Amendment had adduced any argument why the Local Government Board should be censured in regard to the question of allotments. If censure was to be passed anywhere it was upon the Scottish people who had not demanded allotments.

MR. EUGENE WASON: But they have.

*SIR HUGH SHAW-STEWART said the hon. Member had recited a list of counties where the demand had come from, but he thought that, excluding the crofting counties, there were only three or four.

MR. EUGENE WASON said there were twelve or fourteen counties, and he lived in one of them.

*SIR HUGH SHAW-STEWART said the county the demand came from most was Wigtonshire, where it was admitted the matter had been fully dealt with. The hon. Member opposite would agree

with him that the demand for allotments had been infinitely small in Scotland as compared with England. He wished there was a greater demand for allotments in Scotland. Who were most likely to wish for allotments in Scotland? The population of that country might be divided into the extremely rural and the entirely urban. The extremely rural population did not want to spend its spare time in digging gardens. That population consisted chiefly of farm labourers who worked hard all day and wanted something else to do than digging gardens at the end of their day's work. It was different in the towns. It would be a wholesome and a happy thing if those engaged in urban occupations turned their attention and their energy to working in gardens in the evening. But in the case of burghs and cities the providing of allotments, in his opinion, fell more within the province of the burgh and city authorities. He suggested to hon. Members opposite that it would be a very good thing to induce the urban population to engage in gardening, but he did not think their Bill for the taxation of land values was one that was very likely to assist their efforts.

*MR. FINDLAY (Lanarkshire, N.E.) said he wished to emphasise what had been said in regard to the administration of the Poor Law. It was quite true that in many cases it was well to offer the "house" instead of outdoor relief. At the same time there were instances where that involved hardship. He mentioned a case which recently came within his own knowledge of a widow with four young children, who on making application for relief was only granted 7s. 6d. a week. The case was brought before the Local Government Board, which expressed sympathy in the matter, but took no steps to enforce its own recommendation. There being no other power to compel the local board to increase the allowance, the woman was offered the poorhouse, but did not accept it. He thought hon. Members would agree that the allowance which was granted was not in any way adequate for such a case, and that every consideration, patriotic or otherwise, showed that in the case of a widow with four children who was trying to keep her

home together and to maintain independence, which so many Scottish people cherished, there should be some power which could intervene in order that proper outdoor provision should be made for deserving cases. He urged that in future better arrangements should be made for dealing with such cases. In this special case the treatment which was given to the widow was very unfeeling.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Glasgow, St. Rollox) said that in regard to Poor Law administration in Scotland there was no fault to be found with the local authorities or the Local Government Board. It would be a great mistake if the Local Government Board were to interfere in all the cases where people might feel dissatisfied with the action of the local authorities.

*MR. WEIR said that the people in Ross-shire were badly in want of allotments, but they did not get them. He thought that the suggestion of the hon. Member for Clackmannan was an excellent one, namely, that something should be done to give the people in the remoter districts light and leading in this matter. They were anxious to get allotments attached to their cottages on which they might be able to grow vegetables. Under the Act passed in 1894 the Local Government Board in Scotland was empowered to employ medical inspectors. He had asked for a medical inspector for the Island of Lewis, but the Answer given him was that there was only one medical inspector in the whole of Scotland. Now, Ireland, with a smaller population than Scotland, had seven medical inspectors. The Island of Lewis had been grossly neglected by the Local Government Board of Scotland. Within the last few days he had been informed that one of His Majesty's inspectors of schools had been instructed to report, in conjunction with a local medical officer of health, on the sanitary condition of some of the schools in Lewis. During the year 1903 as many as 127 schools were closed in the Crofting Counties for periods of one to four months owing to epidemics. There were fifty-three schools on the mainland of Ross and Cromarty alone,

Sir Hugh Shaw-Stewart.

and of these forty had no water supply laid on, and in many of the schools the ventilation was bad. He asked the right hon. and learned Gentleman to insist on the Local Government Board arranging for a proper supply of water in the schools, efficient ventilation, and an improvement in the other sanitary arrangements. He hoped, indeed, that the Local Government Board would give more attention than they had hitherto done to these matters. It was altogether impossible for one medical inspector to efficiently inspect the schools in the Highlands, much less the schools of the whole country. The result of this neglect of thorough inspection by the Local Government Board was that epidemics had broken out, and that many schools had been closed from one to four months in the year. It was most unfair to the children that, for lack of proper sanitary arrangements, the schools should be shut up in this manner for so long; and he trusted that there would be a thorough inquiry into the whole matter. It was most undesirable that children in remote country districts—some of them as young as five years of age—should be compelled to traverse wild and rugged moors in stormy weather to attend these schools. Many of these children were often without food and had to sit for hours in wet clothes. Surely something should be done to ameliorate these conditions, and that school boards in the Crofting area should have the power to extend the age for attendance at school from five to seven.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said the Local Government Board had nothing to do with that.

*MR. WEIR said that this was a matter of health, and it was the duty of the Local Government Board to see that proper sanitary precautions were taken and that a supply of water was laid on to every school. The old sleepy system was being carried on by the Local Government Board. He had brought the question of uncertified deaths in

the Highlands of Scotland before the House on previous occasions. He was glad to say that there had been a slight improvement of late; but the state of things was still one which would not be tolerated in this country. There were not sufficient doctors in the Island of Lewis. Some time since, on visiting a manse in the island, he found the minister ill. Fortunately he had a London physician with him, otherwise it would have been necessary to send to Stornoway, forty-five miles distant, for a doctor. No wonder that under such circumstances there were so many uncertified deaths in the Highlands. Then as to the question of vaccination, the use of humanised lymph taken from the arms of children had been abolished in this country, yet it was tolerated in the Highlands. The use of humanised lymph had been condemned by the highest medical authorities, and he insisted that it should be absolutely abolished; and that a sufficient supply of glycerinated calf lymph should be provided by the Local Government Board, not only to all parochial doctors, but to every medical practitioner who wished to purchase it.

MR. CHARLES DOUGLAS (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said he wished to urge the desirability of the Local Government Board initiating some degree of common action amongst bodies such as the Prison Commissioners and the Lunacy Board. One of the greatest difficulties and hardships of those engaged in unskilled labour arose from the presence among them of people who were unable to maintain themselves and who constituted a perpetual difficulty in the labour market, and were a drag upon more capable and industrious persons. The time had come when some systematic way of dealing with this population should be adopted at central headquarters, because it could not be done by anyone else. The Government ought to try to devise some more systematic way of dealing with those particular sections of the community. There was another matter upon which the Local Government Board for

Scotland had been somewhat remiss—he alluded to the attitude they had taken up towards the desire of the municipalities of Scotland to have some full and careful consultation in regard to the treatment of the unemployed. It was most desirable that when a crisis was not acute they should consider carefully what measures ought to be taken to deal with such crises as that which occurred last winter, and which might recur next winter. The local authorities had their own views as to the steps which ought to be taken. They desired to consult the Local Government Board and to hold conferences with them upon the subject in order that they might consider the various aspects of the question. It was regrettable that such an opportunity had been allowed to slip by. There ought to be special consultations between the local administrators and the Local Government Board in order that they might be prepared to deal with important problems like this. He was sure that the Local Government Board would increase its usefulness if it would place itself in closer relation with the other boards and local authorities in order to thresh out these questions when the opportunity offered.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvi) asked whether the Local Government Board of Scotland did not intend to issue a circular on the treatment of the unemployed analogous to that which had been issued in England. In Scotland nothing whatever had been done and no advice or guidance had been given by the Local Government Board. Although responsible authorities and great municipalities like Glasgow, Aberdeen, Leith, and other places had met together in conference and agreed to send representatives to the Scottish Office on

this question they had been practically ignored. He hoped that they would have some assurance from the Lord-Advocate that some measure, equivalent to the one now before the House, dealing with the unemployed question in Scotland would be promoted by the Local Government Board, so that when the winter came on and the unemployed question became acute the local authorities would be in a better position to deal with the distress. The Local Government Board would not do its duty if it did not also, in Scotland, take the same action as had been taken in England with regard to the underfeeding of school children. A joint circular had been issued by the Local Government Board and the Education Department in England pointing out to the local authorities and the boards of guardians that they were jointly responsible for making provision for destitute and hungry children. The need for doing this was quite as urgent in Scotland as in England. He was aware that the law in Scotland was more restricted than in England, but he felt that if the Local Government Board would exert itself and approach this question in the same sympathetic spirit as had characterised the recent attempt of the Local Government Board for England and Wales, more could be done than had been done up to the present, and the people of Scotland would not feel that they had been neglected and that England and Wales had been given favoured treatment.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said he noticed in the Returns with regard to allotments for 1902 such entries as—

“the parish council did not consider that there was any general demand for allotments in the parish,”

Mr. Charles Douglas.

and—

“the county council resolved not to take proceedings, and the parish council acquiesced in this decision.”

These particular entries were from Ayrshire, but they were typical of the whole country. He thought they showed that there was no great desire for allotments on the part of the people of Scotland. The Local Government Board would be glad to see the Allotments Act put more into operation, and, therefore, they were quite willing to issue to the parish councils a circular calling attention to the matter, if it were thought calculated to increase the distribution of allotments.

The hon. Member for Leith had spoken of the powers of the Local Government Board with regard to preventing pollution. At the time when he was a member of the Local Government Board he remembered that some very serious questions were raised upon the question of pollution in one of the counties with which the hon. Member was specially connected, and he could assure the Committee that it was no easy matter under the present law to deal with the question, and it was certainly not an economical process to bring the law into operation. The powers of the Local Government Board in regard to this question were very limited, and they were anxious to do everything possible to secure an improvement. The Local Government Board had done their best in the matter, and he was sure that the local authorities quite appreciated the situation and were ready to second their efforts with a view to obtaining some amelioration of the state of things existing at the present time. With reference to what had been said about auditing, that was a very thorny question, and he

was afraid that the efforts of the Local Government Board to secure an effective audit were not always appreciated. The Local Government Board, however, had been consistent in this matter, and in many respects they had been able to bring about a better state of things than previously existed.

With regard to the general question of Poor Law administration which had been raised by the hon. Member for Banffshire, he thought that the suggestion that there had been an inordinate increase in the number of aged poor in the workhouses was not based upon information that was accurate. But even if the suggestion were well founded, it was evidence of improvement in the administration of the workhouses in Scotland. In his view it would be better for the aged poor to be in the workhouses, where they would be properly attended to, than left outside often alone and unattended. The hon. Member for Cromarty complained that there was only one medical inspector. That was true. But, so far as the Local Government Board were aware, one medical inspector was able sufficiently to discharge the duties that fell upon him, and there was no justification for appointing additional medical inspectors. An investigation was being made in regard to the water supply of the particular schools in which the hon. Member was interested with a view to seeing whether any change was necessary, and whether, if a change was necessary, it could be carried out at a reasonable cost. The Local Government Board were most anxious to secure the services of an additional number of medical men in the Highland districts, and efforts had been made to improve the condition of things in that respect. The Local Government

Board were doing everything that was possible to secure that burial grounds that ought to be closed should be closed and to induce the local authorities to provide new burial grounds and thus remove ground for complaint.

With regard to vaccination, they were not troubled with the conscientious objector in Scotland.

MR. WEIR said there could be no such person as a conscientious objector in Scotland. The parents must either allow their children to be vaccinated or go to gaol.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON : In Scotland a few vaccinators still asked for humanised lymph, of which a small supply was always available. He found that in the Report of the Local Government Board for 1904 they stated that the proportion of humanised lymph remained about the same as before. The figures for the hon. Member's own county were calf lymph 514, humanised lymph 21; and for all Scotland the figures were calf lymph 3,085, and humanised lymph 154. Some parents preferred humanised lymph, and the Local Government Board desired to fall in with the views of the parents.

The hon. Member for North-West Lanark had suggested that the Local Government Board ought to assist co-operation among the various boards. That was a matter that could not be brought about without legislation. So far as the treatment of the unemployed question and the feeding of children were concerned, the Scottish Local Government Board had nothing like the powers that the English Local Government Board possessed. But in regard to the question of the

Mr. Scott Dickson.

unemployed, adequate provision had been made in the past by the voluntary efforts of the large local authorities concerned. The Local Government Board appreciated the importance of the question, and had no idea of losing sight of it. The feeding of children was a matter entirely beyond their power under the Act of 1894, but it was a question that would receive, as it deserved, their most careful consideration.

*MR. WEIR asked for an explanation with regard to the salary of the medical inspector, which, according to the Estimates, appeared to have decreased in amount instead of rising by the sum of the annual increment of £25.

MR. CALDWELL pointed out that the Reports of the Local Government Board gave the percentage of paupers, indoor and outdoor together, of sixty-five years of age and upwards as 39·8; there were also 7,433 children, and 26,233, or 46·8 per cent., between the ages of fourteen and sixty-five. The test of the poorhouse was applied particularly to the old people, in order to secure support for them from their families. It was not applied to men unwilling to work, because, according to the law of Scotland, men who were able to work were not entitled to relief. Personally, when connected with the administration of the Poor Law, he had always endeavoured to have as few people as possible in the poorhouse. There were doubtless cases in which, through the inability of persons to look after themselves and the absence of relatives to do for them, it was better that poorhouse relief should be given, but as a rule the poorhouse was not resorted to under good administ

except in special cases. He hoped the Lord-Advocate would see that future Reports of the Board of Supervision gave fuller statistics as to the ages of people in the poorhouse, so that it could be more easily seen whether the aged inmates were increasing in number. One reason why a larger number of aged poor might be expected in the poorhouse was the increasing difficulty experienced by old people in obtaining employment. Formerly partially disabled or aged persons did certain light work, or odd jobs, for which they received a few shillings a week, and were thus able to keep out of the poorhouse, but now all labour was in the hands of the able-bodied between the ages of eighteen and forty-five or so, and full trade-union rate of wages had to be paid. That being so, a state of things was arising in connection with these old people who were able to do a certain amount of work, which would have to be dealt with. He believed the local boards, with the sanction of the Department, were relaxing the rigidity of the law, and, therefore, he failed to see why the Lord-Advocate should be so unsympathetic; and refuse to meet a conference on the subject.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said the explanation asked for by the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty was that a fresh appointment had been made, and naturally the newly-appointed official started at a lower salary than had been paid to his predecessor. With regard to the aged poor, his point was that he could not find any figures enabling him to say whether there had been an increase in the number of the indoor paupers, as the figures given drew no distinction between indoor and outdoor. But, so

far as the figures went, they did not justify the suggestion that there was any increase in the proportion of indoor paupers. The difficulty experienced by old men in getting employment might point in that direction, but the figures showed that in regard to all paupers, indoor and out, there was a diminution in the number over sixty-five years of age. The percentages were: in 1901, 42·37; in 1902, 42·72; in 1903, 42·16; and in 1904, 59·87; the actual numbers for the same years being 32,157, 32,017, 32,139, and 32,331 respectively.

MR. BLACK: There is an actual increase.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said that, taking the growth of pauperism and the growth of the population there was a net decrease in the number of paupers over sixty five-years of age. He repudiated the suggestion of want of sympathy put forward by the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark. He regarded the question as one of great gravity which would have to be considered and dealt with sympathetically, and there was no desire on the part of the Local Government Board to avoid the consideration of the matter.

MR. MUNRO FERGUSON said that in times of depression in Scotland, as in England, works were hastily improvised for the relief of the unemployed, in connection with which the money spent might frequently be better employed and the labour directed into more useful channels. Attempts had been made to deal with such emergencies elsewhere,

and he thought it very desirable that the Local Government Board in Scotland should study the efforts which had been made with a view to being better able to deal with any emergency that might arise.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said that that idea had not been lost sight of by the Local Government Board.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 59 ;
Noes, 114. (Division List No. 205.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Asher, Alexander
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brown, George M (Edinburgh)
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, N.E.(YorkNR,Whitby)
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Cheetham, John Frederick
Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dobbie, Joseph
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Chas. M. (Lanark)
Ellice, Capt EC(S Andwrs'Bghs
Evans, Samuel T (Glamorgan)
Eve, Harry Trelawney

Ferguson, R.C. Munro (Leith)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hardie, J.Keir (Merthyr Tydvil
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Lamont, Norman
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lough, Thomas
London, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
MacCrae, George
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)

Pirie, Duncan V.
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Runciman, Walter
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford).
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (Forfarshire)
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, J. H. (Halifax)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)!

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
Eugene Wason and Mr.
Black.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt.HuHugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Col. James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A J.(Manch'r
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (Hornsey
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W(Leeds
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Beach, RtHn Sir Michael Hicks
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W.(Derbysh.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt.HnJ A(Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cross, Alexander (Glasgow)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles

Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt.Hn. A. Akers
Dyke, Rt Hn. Sir Wm. Hart
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J (Mane'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Finlay, Sir R.B (Inv'n'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J.E(Elgin & Nairn
Goschen, Hn. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
Hamilton, Marq of Lnd'nderry
Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, Arthur Howard(Hanley
Heath, Sir Jas. (Staffords.NW
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Kennaway, Rt.Hn. Sir J. H.
Kerr, John
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lee, Arthur H.(Hants,Fareham
Long, Rt Hn Walter(Bristol, S.
Lucas, Reginald J(Portsmouth
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool
M'Killop, James (Stirlingshire

Majendie, James A. H.
Maxwell, Rt HnSirH.E.(Wigt'n
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
Morgan, D. J. (Walthamstow)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicholson, William Graham
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Pretymann, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H.(Renfrew
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, Rt HnJ Parker (Lanarks
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E (Chichester)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.

Mr. Munro Ferguson.

Tuff, Charles

Tuke, Sir John Batty

Turnour, Viscount

Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.

Warde, Colonel C. E.

Welby, Sir Chas. G. E (Notts)

Whiteley, H. (Ashton und Lyne)

Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R)

Wilson, John (Glasgow)

Wylie, Alexander

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir

Alexander Acland-Hood

and Viscount Valentia.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CLASS IV.

Motion made, and Question proposed.

“That a sum, not exceeding £1,047,290, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1906, for Public Education in Scotland, and for Science and Art in Scotland, including a Grant in Aid.”

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) moved a reduction of the Vote by £100 in order to call attention to the Minute of the Education Department dealing with the training of teachers. He asked for information as to denominational teaching in colleges, and contended that the representation of the Edinburgh School Board on the committee established by the Minute should at least be six members instead of three as at present. He wished particularly to bring before the notice of the Lord-Advocate the method by which this committee had been appointed. He thought the claim put forward by the Education Department that they had power to arrange for the transference of property from certain organisations to this committee was an extraordinary one. By doing this the Department were not only ignoring Parliament but they were claiming a right which this House ought to inquire into most carefully before they allowed the Department to exercise it. The Department took this course and laid the Minute on the Table of this House,

and hon. Members had had no opportunity whatever of drawing attention to it, although an ample opportunity had been given for its discussion in another place. He wished to ask the Lord-Advocate under what statute the Education Department for Scotland had the powers which they had arrogated to themselves in regard to this question? With regard to the principle involved in the establishment of this committee under the Minute there was a general agreement in Scotland. He thought it was a step in the right direction, and he had no hesitation in saying that the principle upon which they had proceeded was a right one. He wished to point out that the colleges which it was proposed to take over were denominational, and he understood that after the committee had taken them over they were still to remain denominational. That was contrary to the spirit of the time in Scotland, and he hoped the Lord-Advocate would give them some information as to how it was proposed to continue this system. He wished to know what they intended to do after the Education Bill was passed if the provincial councils were established? Would the committee now established be swallowed up or would it remain as a separate entity? The great desire was in favour of co-ordination, and the provincial councils ought to superintend the training of the teachers. He did not think that the representation given to Edinburgh upon this committee was sufficient. Whether they took population as their basis or the number of teachers employed in grant-earning

schools the proportion of representation as far as Edinburgh was concerned was entirely disproportionate. Edinburgh had a population of 516,000 and 748 teachers, and yet it only had three members on this committee. It could not be overlooked that Edinburgh would really be the training ground for the teachers, and he thought it was entitled to a more reasonable representation, and they claimed that Edinburgh ought really to have six members on this committee. At any rate, the Universities had five representatives and the least that should be given to Edinburgh was five. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,047,190, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

*SIR ANDREW AGNEW (Edinburgh, S.) hoped the Lord-Advocate would see his way to give Edinburgh a little better representation on the committee. The School Board of Edinburgh contended that their views would not be adequately represented by only three representatives, and he thought they were quite right in this contention. Whatever test was taken, whether the population served by the board, size, the importance of the schools, or the number of teachers employed, Edinburgh was entitled to a larger representation. But there was a still stronger reason. In this Minute it was laid down as a condition of making the Parliamentary grant that the school boards should provide the students being trained as teachers with proper facilities for practice in teaching in their schools. Another clause laid down that classes for these students were to be held in towns

Mr. McCrae.

where a University or part of a University was situate. It was, therefore, obvious that nearly all the students who were trained by the Edinburgh Committee would have to learn the art of teaching in the board schools of Edinburgh. That being the case, it was surely right that the School Board of Edinburgh should have a more liberal representation on this committee. He thought that under these circumstances the School Board of Edinburgh had made out a strong case for an increase in their representation.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) commented on the large proportion of elementary school teachers who had taken University degrees in Scotland, and said this had largely contributed to the efficiency of education. The accessibility of the Scottish Universities had been increased by the gift of Mr. Carnegie. Perhaps the Lord-Advocate would explain why it was that the denominational character of the training colleges was retained. It was not necessary, nor would it have been made a condition had the authorities been properly approached. There was surely no object in retaining the denominational character when there was no force in the condition. This was really a step in the direction of denominationalism which was, as a matter of fact, an anachronism in Scotland at the present time. He trusted that the Lord-Advocate would be able to assure them that the training colleges in Scotland would be put upon a proper footing, and that they would have none of this State denominationalism left in them.

MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire) appealed to the Lord-Advocate for a statement that would remove the uncertainty

that existed in reference to the training of teachers. They wished to be assured that action of some sort would be taken upon this Minute, or at least announced, so that those responsible for the training of teachers might know exactly where they stood.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) hoped that the Government would announce that they proposed to proceed at once to develop the training of teachers. He quite agreed with what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen. He regretted that the discussion of so important a subject as this had been crowded into such a very small corner, because it seemed to him to be the largest question they had to deal with either upon the Estimates or the Bill.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said he could not complain of the considerate way in which this subject had been treated by hon. Members who had spoken. The view of the Department was that their proposals should be such as would satisfy the people of Scotland and Parliament. The question had excited a good deal of interest for years past, and the present state of things was admitted to be unsatisfactory. The Government had undertaken that the Minute should not be acted upon until the view of Parliament was ascertained. With regard to training colleges the truth was that, though they were termed denominational, they had not, in fact, been denominational institutions with the exception of a few Roman Catholic colleges. So far as the Presbyterian bodies were concerned, they had given the training which the large

majority of the people of Scotland desired for their teachers and children, and therefore they could not be regarded in any proper sense as denominational institutions. On the other hand, it was right to state that before this Minute was passed negotiations took place between those who were the owners and managers of the various training colleges, and they distinctly intimated, as the condition of any possible transference to the proposed committees, that they would insist on the same religious teaching being continued in the colleges after they were handed over as in the past. It was obvious that the arrangement would be for the benefit of both parties, and he did not think they were trenching in any way upon any question which would raise religious or sectarian animosity.

As to the position with regard to the provincial councils, if the Education Bill passed, as he hoped it would, this session, obviously the right position seemed to them to be that the provincial councils should step into the position of the committees and should supersede them. It would be out of the question that the provincial councils should not be allowed to carry on what was really the most important part of the educational system of Scotland. He thought both sides would agree that the view of the Government upon this point was the sound and correct one. As to the additional representation claimed by the Edinburgh School Board, he did not think that school board could claim that it was badly treated if it was treated in the same way as the Glasgow School Board. There were a great many other school boards represented, and there was a general representation of all the educational authorities in the district. As far

as this question of the increased representation of Edinburgh was concerned, he was afraid that he could not hold out any hope that there would be any modification.

MR. McCRAE thought that in what the right hon. Gentleman had said he had shown great lack of faith as to the prospects of passing the Education Bill. The Lord-Advocate had not given any adequate explanation as to why the Department had exercised these powers in reference to the transference of property.

MR. CALDWELL said that this was a matter which could not be decided before twelve o'clock. He denied that by a Minute of the Department they could give power to transfer private property vested in individuals to another body of individuals, that could only be done by an Act of Parliament.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT (KING'S ANSWER TO ADDRESS, JUNE 7TH).

Resolution reported.

"That the annual sum of £4,000 net be granted to His Majesty out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the said annuity to commence and take effect upon the day upon which the right hon. William Court Gully, late Speaker of the House of Commons,

Mr. Scott Dickson

ceased to hold the office of Speaker of the House of Commons, to be settled in the most beneficial manner upon, and to continue during the life of, him the said right hon. William Court Gully."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by the Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Victor Cavendish.

MR. SPEAKER'S RETIREMENT BILL.

"To settle and secure an annuity upon the right hon. William Court Gully in consideration of his eminent services," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 249.]

ADJOURNMENT.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington), in moving the adjournment of the House, said the first business tomorrow would be the Second Reading of the Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill. The second order would be the Committee on East India Loans (Railways). He was desired by the Prime Minister to say that on the earliest convenient opportunity he would move, on going into Committee, that Mr. Laurence Hardy do take the Chair as Deputy-Chairman of Committees.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn"—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned at four minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 23rd June, 1905.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Birmingham Corporation Bill; Brentwood Gas Bill. Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Millport Piers and Burgh Extension Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, etc.) Bill [Lords]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London, No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [Lords]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Pier and Harbour Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

RAILWAY BILLS (GROUP 8).

Mr. ASHTON reported from the Committee on Group 8 of Railway Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned until Thursday, 29th June, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

COUNTY COURTS BILL.

Petition of the Association of Trade Protection Societies of the United Kingdom, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Bourbie and other places, against; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

VOL. CXLVII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT (1901) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES (IRELAND) BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW AREAS.

Petition from Royal and other Burghs of Scotland, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION PROSECUTIONS BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN INDIA).

Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in India, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on March 31st, 1905, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 204.]

TREATY SERIES (No. 17, 1905).

Copy presented, of Paper relating to the Accession of New Zealand to the Additional Act of the Industrial Property Convention, dated December 14th, 1900; and to the Accession of Ceylon to the Convention of 1883 as modified by the Additional Act of December 14th, 1900 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DOGS REGULATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1865.

Account presented, of the Receipts and Expenditure under the Act for the year 1904 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 205.]

FINES, ETC. (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of Fines accounted for by the Registrar of Petty Sessions Clerks for 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 206.]

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY
THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Richmond Bridge. Cash Account for the year 1903 [by Act].
2. Richmond Bridge. Cash Account for the year 1904 [by Act].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Reported Expulsion of European and
American Traders from Port Arthur.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will state whether any and, if any, how many British firms are included in the order of the Japanese authorities that European and American firms still established in Port Arthur are to depart and remove their merchandise.

(Answered by Earl Percy.) No such order has been issued by the Japanese authorities at Port Arthur.

Transmission of Letters to Villages
near Sandwich.

MR. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the inconvenience caused by the transmission of letters to Ash, Eastry, Staple, Worth, Woodnesborough, and Wingham via Dover instead of via Sandwich, by which route they were formerly sent, and in view of the fact that the villages named are adjacent to Sandwich, which is also their railway station, he will consider the advisability of again having postal matter for these villages sent via Sandwich.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) I will have inquiry made on the subject, and will communicate with the hon. Member in due course.

Irish Postal Officials—Duties and Pay.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that arrangements in other large centres for running the duties on rotary or sectional lines are working satisfactorily, he will give instructions for the same to be carried out in the Belfast sorting office.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General if he can state under what circumstances a sorting clerk and telegraphist at Belfast, who is over nineteen years of age, has been informed that he cannot have the minimum wage fixed by the Stanley wages revision scheme unless he agrees to an alteration being made in his incremental date, which would inflict an ultimate loss upon the person affected.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that telegraph messengers at Belfast are compelled to perform Sunday duties from 6 a.m. till 10 o'clock, or they may have split duty from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m. and from 4 p.m. till 6 p.m., during which time each messenger rarely delivers four messages the value of which is 2d., he will consider the advisability of granting a fixed wage for Sunday duty.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General under what circumstances a female season substitute has been employed at Londonderry Post Office to replace a male operator; if he can say why a male person should not have been employed, seeing there are male learners open for such special work; and will the employment of the female instead of the male be allowed to affect prejudicially the duties of the entire male staff.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) I am making inquiries as regards the points raised in the foregoing Questions, and I will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Postal Officials and Trade Societies.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he has made his promised inquiry into the case of a telegraphist named Wilson, stationed at Clones, county Monaghan, who complained that he had been ill-treated by the local postmaster because of his official connection with the Postal Telegraph Clerks' Association; and, if so, will he state what conclusion he has come to in the case.

(Answered by Lord Stanley.) The inquiry promised is in progress. It has been necessary to call for some further information, and I am unable to say at

present when I shall be able to state my conclusion, but I will lose no time in communicating it to the hon. Member.

County Courts (No. 2) Bill—Liverpool Court of Passage.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton): To ask Mr. Attorney-General whether, in the event of County Courts (No. 2) Bill becoming law, and powers of ordering summary judgment being conferred by Rules of County Courts, similar powers of ordering summary judgment will be sanctioned for the Liverpool Court of Passage; and whether suggested Rules to that effect have been drawn up accordingly.

(Answered by Sir Robert Finlay.) This matter does not rest with me, but I am satisfied that in the event supposed in the Question every consideration will be given in the proper quarter to the views of my hon. friend upon this point.

Promotion of Assistant Clerks in the National Education Office, Dublin.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that certain assistant clerks serving in the National Education Office, Dublin, were, under the terms of Clause 15 of the Order in Council of the 29th November, 1898, recommended by the heads of their department for promotion to the second division in November, 1903, and whether, having regard to the anxiety of these officers as to the recommendations made on their behalf and the fact that some of them have been studying for the qualifying examination, he will have the matter looked into with a view to having the recommendations submitted to the Treasury.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) The proposals mentioned were transmitted to the Treasury, but the Irish Government did not feel able to recommend them for adoption.

Irish National Board of Education—Special Inspectors of Irish.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he

will state how many special inspectors of Irish have been selected by the National Board of Education, and what is the extent of their respective districts.

(Answered by Mr. Walter Long.) Mr. Lehané has been specially appointed as inspector of Irish, and has general supervision of instruction in that subject. Messrs. Mangan, Newell, and Duffy, district inspectors, who are familiar with Irish, have been assigned to co-operate with Mr. Lehané in examining and testing classes in Irish. Dr. Skeffington, senior inspector, and Messrs. P. J. Fitzgerald and McEnery, district inspectors, also possess a knowledge of Irish. Instruction in Irish is superintended in the circuits and by the inspectors named, as follows:—

Dublin (1) -	-	} Mr. Lehané.
Dublin (2) -	-	
Longford -	-	
Sligo -	-	
Ballinasloe -	-	
Portarlington -	-	

Belfast (1) -	-	} Mr. Mangan.
Belfast (2) -	-	
Ballymena -	-	
Omagh -	-	
Londonderry -	-	
Armagh -	-	} Mr. Duffy.
Clones -	-	
Dundalk -	-	

Galway -	-	} Mr. Newell.
Castlebar -	-	

Limerick -	-	} Dr. Skeffington.
Cork (1) -	-	
Cork (2) -	-	
Killarney -	-	

Waterford -	-	} Mr. P. J. Fitzgerald.
Clonmel -	-	

	-	Mr. McEnery.
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Contraband of War—Imprisonment of Crew of Steamer "Franklyn."

MR. NANNETTI: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state under what circumstances the crew of the British steamer "Franklyn" were sentenced to ten weeks imprisonment by the magistrate at Hong-Kong for refusing to carry Welsh steam coal, contraband of war, to a Japanese port; whether he is aware these men were handcuffed and

marched through the streets of Hong-Kong; that they have suffered the whole of their sentence, being fed during the first seven days on bread and water, and afterwards on what is known as No. 2 prison diet; if he can state whether the circumstances have been reported to the Colonial Office; and whether facilities were offered the men to appeal to a superior Court in Hong-Kong against their conviction.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Lyttelton.) I have no information on the subject, but am asking the Governor of Hong-Kong for a full report on the facts of the case.

Cricket Ground and Gymnasium for Troops on Salisbury Plain.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed to provide a cricket ground and a gymnasium for the troops quartered on Salisbury Plain; and, if so, when such provision will be made.

(Answered by Mr. Secretary Arnold-Forster.) The provision of a cricket ground and gymnasium for the troops quartered on Salisbury Plain is under consideration, and it is hoped that action in the matter will soon be taken.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (No. 2) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) moved that the Bill be read a second time that day three months. He did so, he said, because he wished to call attention to the state of doubt and uncertainty that prevailed in the Army which must result, and which had resulted, in inefficiency. He asked the Secretary of State for War whether it was true, as reported in to-day's papers, that General Sir Neville Lyttelton had resigned.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): No, Sir, it is not true,

*MAJOR SEELY said he understood, then, that the report was not true. But it would be a matter for the consideration of the House whether they ought not to have before Monday's proceedings some definite assurance from the Government as to where the responsibility rested for the deplorable occurrences lately brought to the notice of the House. There could be no doubt that immense defalcations had occurred; and they had occurred over so long a period and on such a scale that there could be no doubt some one in high authority must be made responsible. Either the Commander-in-Chief in South Africa of that day must resign or the Secretary of State for War of that day must resign. The Secretary of State for War for the present day was said to be responsible, but he was only responsible for delay. It would facilitate discussion on Monday if a definite assurance could be given in the House to-day as to the view the Government took of the responsibility of the soldier and of the civilian in this matter. It was peculiarly pertinent to the question, seeing that in the event of the resignation of Sir Neville Lyttelton his pay would come under the Vote which the Bill proposed to make good. But the question of the salary of the Secretary of State for War was raised under the present Vote. It seemed to him that responsibility rested equally on the civil and military heads of the Army, and, if the Secretary of State for War would say what the view of the Government was, it would no doubt be convenient, having regard to the proceedings on Monday. It would not be proper for him to enter into the question of the general responsibility of the Government. It only remained for him to say that there must be some continuity of responsibility for the appointment of the soldier even if there was not continuity of the policy. And if they had dismissed the soldier the Government also stood condemned.

Gross inefficiency had resulted from the doubt and uncertainty that existed in the Army. How great that doubt and uncertainty was the present Secretary of State for War was not aware, but that doubt and uncertainty prevailed

in all grades of the services of the Army must cause grave alarm to all who took an interest in this matter. The shortage of officers was in itself a matter of the greatest concern, and the measures taken to make good that shortage were simply extraordinary. At that moment officers were being introduced into the Army without any competitive examination whatever; while on the other hand officers were being rejected because they had got too few marks by about twenty or thirty. The result was the greatest discontent in the forces—a discontent so great as to be in itself a cause of the shortage of officers. The uncertainty among the rank and file was even greater. He had been told there was no recruiting sergeant, and no Member of the House except the Secretary of State for War (who would not tell them) who could explain to the soldier who enlisted at the present time what his *status* would be in two years time. The whole matter was so complicated by constant changes in the terms of service, and adumbrated changes about which they could get no information, that no man could say what his position was to be in the future. Therefore in regard to the officers and men a state of uncertainty and doubt prevailed that must result in inefficiency.

Since this matter was last before the House that which they had foretold had come to pass about the Volunteers. In certain corps the Volunteers in camp were far fewer in number than had been expected. It had been stated by the men to their commanding officers that the reason they would not go into camp was because they were not sure their services were really required. Inefficiency must result in corruption. They knew it had resulted in corruption in the past and it was likely that under similar circumstances corruption would recur. If they permitted inefficiency to continue they permitted corruption to continue. If a man did not know how long he was to be at his post, responsibility became a mere form. If they were to put an end to this inefficiency and the resulting corruption, any Commission appointed must have the full approbation of both Parties in the House, of both Houses of Parliament, and of the supporters of

both Parties in the country. By such means alone could they hope to get rid of that corruption.

*MR. SPEAKER: The composition of the Commission is not relevant to the discussion.

*MAJOR SEELY said he could only venture to urge that if they wished to put an end to the inefficiency which had been the cause of corruption in the Army in the past, and which would assuredly cause it again if nothing were done, any Commission appointed must be one in which the whole House must have confidence.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY (Somersetshire, S.) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day three months.’”—(*Major Seely*.)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said the Motion made by the hon. Member was one of the most extraordinary that he had ever heard made in the House. This matter had been very much before the House and country during the last few days, and it had been met by His Majesty's Government by efficient measures for thorough inquiry on the subject which was exciting so much interest in the country, and the Government had also met the constitutional application of the Opposition by a promise of a day for its discussion. The hon. and gallant Gentleman, not content to wait for the immediate and spirited measures taken for thorough investigation and consideration, begged the question by proclaiming widespread uncertainty and doubt to which he attributed inefficiency, and, so far as the forms of the House would permit, proceeded to pre-judge and anticipate the position. He (Sir J. Fergusson) intended to address himself to a matter which was germane and appropriate to the question before the House.

The hon. Member referred to the want of efficiency in the service, the

difficulty of getting recruits, and the unsatisfactory character of those the country was obliged to accept. That was a point which ought always to be enforced and they ought to do their best to reduce that evil by removing every obstacle in the way of men of a superior class desirous of joining the Army. He had always been surprised that so little interest was taken in those measures which were intended to induce men to enter the Army by, in some respects, providing for their future after they had finished their service with the colours. It had always seemed to him to be a perfectly marvellous thing that a man who had efficiently fulfilled his service with the colours should be, by reason of the fact, regarded as disqualified for civilian employment. He had done what he could to open the doors of the Civil Service to men who had been efficient in the Army and were of good character, and had established a rule in the Post Office, which he believed was to some extent in existence still, that in case of vacancies arising the preference should be given to efficient old soldiers. He complained also that where a soldier was employed in the Civil Service after serving his time in the Army, he was not allowed to claim that a single moment of the time passed in his military service should be reckoned towards his superannuation. What was the use of talking of a desire to benefit the Army and raise the standard of our soldiers if they put this ban of disqualification upon them. In the French, German and Austrian armies, soldiers of good character were guaranteed civil employment, but that was not so here. This country had, he thought, much to learn from the war in the East as to what true patriotism really meant. He brought this matter once more to the attention of the House and earnestly hoped it would receive the consideration of the Government, and that they would get these hindrances in the way of good men joining the Army removed.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said the Motion which was directed against the Second Reading of this Bill was not an unusual one. It was moved under unusual circumstances, which, however, could be justified. Mr. Speaker

had pointed out that this Bill proposed to make good supplies to the Army, and therefore anything appertaining to the Army came within it. Therefore all who objected to the Army or the conduct of the War Office were within their rights in discussing these matters. He did not know whether Mr. Speaker intended to rule that matters not relating to the Army or the Navy were not within the scope of the discussion, but, if so, he (Mr. Robertson) would point out that as the Bill proposed to issue sums of money out of the Consolidated Fund to be applied to any purpose, any action of the Government was fair subject for comment.

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member is asking my opinion on what he has just stated I do not agree with his view at all. The discussion must be limited to-day to the three Votes included in this Bill, Pay of the Army, Works Vote for the Navy, and Army stores. Any matters relevant to those three Votes are open for discussion.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the main point to which he wished to call the attention of the House was the very remarkable character of the Bill. It was indeed a very unusual Bill. For many years they had not seen a Consolidated Fund No. 2 Bill in that House, and he was not surprised at hon. Members seeking information when the preliminary Resolutions were brought forward. But, after all, the Bill was only a reversion to the established constitutional practice of the House. Until the last year or two there had always been three Consolidated Fund Bills, and on each opportunity was afforded of arraigning the conduct of the Government. It was not by reason of any virtue on the part of the Government that there were to be three Bills this year. It was due to a blunder on their part in the early part of the session when they failed to get the first Vote for the Army through in time to include it in the first Consolidated Fund Bill. Originally the practice was to limit Votes to two months supply for the Army and Navy and to three months at the outside for the Civil Service; it necessitated three Consolidated Fund Bills. But a silent revolution had been deliberately effected

by the present First Lord of the Treasury. He only obtained small amounts for the Army and Navy at the beginning of the session, but he asked enough Supply for the Civil Service for five and a half months, and used that money for Army and Navy purposes. That ought not to be done. Money which was voted by Parliament should only be used for the purposes for which it was voted, and one service ought not to be financed out of funds voted for an altogether different service. For the first time in the history of this country the Army this year had been left without any provision by issue out of the Consolidated Fund because the first Vote was not taken in time for the first Bill. He understood that the Government justified and excused their present action by the Public Accounts and Charges Act, 1891—an obscure Act, never explained to the House of Commons, and, as he believed, never intended to be used systematically as a means of providing for one service out of funds voted by Parliament for a totally different service. The Prime Minister, above all men, was bound to maintain intact the financial safeguards, yet he had resorted to this device of taking three times as much as was required for one service and using it for another. The power of doing this, supplemented by the automatic closure, made the Government absolutely indifferent as to what Votes were discussed in Supply; they did not care how the time was wasted, and they had tried to throw the responsibility of selecting Votes for debate on the Opposition, while they had countenanced deliberate obstruction after 9 p.m. on almost every Supply day.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is going a very long way from the Bill before the House. He seems to be discussing the whole system on which Supply is taken, and that certainly is not germane to this Bill. He has referred to the Public Accounts and Charges Act. Under that Act the money is legally applied, and I fail to see how the hon. Member has any *locus standi* for discussing that Act.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was not attacking or disputing the interpretation put upon that Act. His point

was that it was never intended to be systematically used in the way it had been used. The Government had taken but small Votes for the Army, and unnecessarily large Votes for the Civil Service, and having the advantage of an automatic closure of Supply at the end of the session they had managed to escape from criticism, and the debates on the Estimates were no longer of any practical importance as attaching responsibility to any Minister.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is a criticism on the general system under which Supply is voted and is a very long way from the point we are discussing in connection with this Bill, viz. whether the sums already voted shall be applied to the purposes for which they have been voted by the House.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that if that were so he would be perfectly content, but they knew that the issues would not be restricted to the services for which the money was actually voted.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is done under the Public Accounts and Charges Act, and if the hon. Member is finding fault with that, I repeat it has nothing to do with this Bill.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that while the Act in question authorised what was being done it did not justify it. It was a wrong thing to do.

*MR. SPEAKER: It is done under an Act of Parliament. If the hon. Member wishes to criticise that Act this is not the time to do it, for it is not referred to in this Bill.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was not criticising the Act of Parliament in the least. All things might be lawful, but all things were not expedient, and he submitted that it was not expedient that this course should be followed.

Another matter to which he wished to call attention was the power assumed by the Treasury to authorise a Department to spend money voted for one purpose upon some other purpose. It would be found from Vote 10 for the Navy that

the building on Whale Island, costing £45,000, was an absolutely new service, which had never been named to the House of Commons before this year, and yet £5,000 was spent in the last financial year by anticipation on that service. That surely was a matter well worth the attention of the House, and he hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would state what power he conceived he had to sanction such a transfer of money. Apparently the Comptroller and Auditor-General did not see his way to object to such expenditure, but when the accounts for the financial year just concluded came to be examined, that official would find that the Admiralty had spent £5,000 on a service not sanctioned by Parliament, and he submitted that the Comptroller and Auditor-General had no right to pass such an expenditure merely because by a Vote in a subsequent financial year the service had been ratified. As to the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement on a former occasion, he did not believe he himself had ever done anything of the kind, nor did he think the practice was covered by the ordinary power of the Treasury to transfer money from one portion to another of the same Votes. His point on this case was that a considerable new service not provided for under any Estimate had been sanctioned out of money voted to the Admiralty for another purpose. The Public Accounts Committee stated that the practice appeared to be growing, and that they thought the attention of Parliament should be called to the matter, as it

"seriously affected the control of Parliament over public expenditure."

He entirely concurred in that statement, and he desired the Chancellor of the Exchequer to quote statutory authority for what had been done. There had been some remarkable cases of the practice in times past, but they had been defended as matters of urgency and emergency and covered by a Supplementary Estimate, followed by an Act of Parliament, before the close of the financial year. The purchase of Chilian battleships was one case, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked for an indemnity in the shape of a Supplementary Estimate, and little was

Mr. Edmund Robertson.

said about it. Then there was the purchase of submarines. That was not a case of emergency, the Government of the day, after refusing during the whole Parliamentary session to adopt such weapons, took advantage of the recess to enter into a large contract without the sanction of Parliament. But that also was covered by a Supplementary Estimate and an Act of Parliament passed before the close of the financial year. That, however, could not be said of the present case. These practices struck at the root of Parliamentary control over expenditure. If the Government of the day departed from the old financial safeguards, and if the representatives of the Treasury, particularly the Prime Minister, persisted in treating the various stages of Consolidated Fund Bills as mere formalities, such laxity in the centre of the financial system of the Empire would assuredly be followed by inefficiency and corruption. He should, therefore, support the Amendment of his hon. friend.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.) said that not being quite certain how much of the argument of the hon. and learned Member was in order, he was in some difficulty as to how much of the argument he ought to answer. He would, however, confine himself to the affairs of this year, which he understood were in order, and in regard to which the hon. and learned Member had raised two points, neither of them new, but both familiar to the House, and to which the hon. and learned Member appeared to attach great importance. The first was that the Treasury had committed an irregularity, in the belief of the hon. and learned Member without precedent, in that they had not included in the first Consolidated Fund Bill of the year a sufficient amount of Army or Navy money, and had consequently, according to the hon. and learned Member, been paying for Army and Navy services out of money provided for Civil Services.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that his contention was that this year,

for the first time to his knowledge, for a period of three months provision for the Army had not been made by any grant provided for by a Consolidated Fund Act.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN understood the hon. and learned Member's argument to be that the Treasury had been obliged to pay for the Army under the authority of a Consolidated Fund Act based upon Votes for Civil Services and certain Navy Votes. As to there being no precedent, the hon. and learned Member must have looked in the wrong place. Under a Unionist Government there was probably no precedent, but there were precedents under each of the last two Liberal Administrations. In 1883—

MAJOR SEELY: That was before the Public Accounts and Charges Act.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that had no bearing whatever on the point. It was an exact precedent, and was not affected by the Public Accounts and Charges Act of 1891. In 1883 the first Consolidated Fund Act covered no Vote for the Navy, and did not cover any Civil Services.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: When was the second Consolidated Fund Bill passed?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: On April 10th.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: When did it pass this House?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I should think immediately before.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the right hon. Gentleman had not pursued his researches far enough. The Government of that day passed the Consolidated Fund Bill well in time for it to become an Act before March 31st, but delay occurred in another place. The Bill was hung up for a fortnight in the Lords, but so far as this House was concerned all the necessary steps had been taken to legalise the transaction.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that the hon. and learned Member knew very well that no Liberal Government had ever asked the House of Lords to sit in order to discharge duties necessary to conform with the law and had been refused. He now came to the second precedent. In 1894, when a Liberal Government was in office, and the Public Accounts and Charges Act had been passed, the first Consolidated Fund Act covered the Army and Navy Votes, but it did not cover any Vote on Account for the Civil Services. Whereas in this case Army payments had been made out of money that was voted for the Civil Services, in that case Civil Services had to be paid for out of money voted for Army or Navy purposes. In this second case, the second Consolidated Fund Bill did not pass until June 1st. He thought he had supplied the hon. and learned Gentleman with precedents which afforded sufficient authority for the practice which the Government had pursued. He granted that it was inconvenient not to have these Votes passed before March 31st, and it must have been the object of every Government to secure that a sufficiency of Supply should be voted before that date in order to comply absolutely with the letter and the spirit of the law. If that consideration did not influence the Government, they would be moved to it by consideration of their own convenience, because, if they did not do it, they would, subsequently, require a second Consolidated Fund Bill in the middle of the session, which, of course, occupied time to their disadvantage.

The other point which the hon. and learned Gentleman put to him was as to the authority of the Treasury to sanction in any circumstances the commencement of work in anticipation of Parliamentary sanction, before Parliament had voted any money for that work, without taking a Supplementary Estimate in the session in which it was done. The hon. and learned Gentleman had admitted that the Treasury had power to anticipate Parliamentary sanction in this way, subject to the obligation of bringing in a Supplementary Estimate in the same session of Parliament. Therefore, in this case also, the

principle was admitted, and the only question was, for how long should the Treasury act without the direct approval of Parliament. In his opinion, the power of the Treasury to act in this way should always be used with great caution and discretion.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Where is the power?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said that, in his opinion, the power was given under the Appropriation Act. That was the view of the Public Accounts Committee, who distinguished between the Army and Navy Votes and the Civil Service Votes, not in respect to the principle, but in respect to the extent to which the principle could be employed. In the case of the Civil Service Votes the Treasury had no power, except to authorise variations of expenditure between one sub-head and another sub-head in the same Vote. What the Public Accounts Committee called attention to was that for this purpose, under the Appropriation Act, all Army Votes counted as one and all Navy Votes counted as one. The same authority which authorised the Treasury to vary the appropriation as between sub-heads in the Civil Service Votes enabled them to vary the appropriation as between the Army and the Navy Votes, and they secured subsequent confirmation of that distribution by Parliament in the Resolutions that were taken. This was an ancient practice, and one of which the hon. and learned Gentleman himself had been guilty. When the hon. and learned Member for Dundee last questioned him upon this subject he reminded him that having, like himself, been Civil Lord to the Admiralty he must be aware that this was an ancient practice, and one which the hon. and learned Member himself had adopted. The hon. and learned Member gave him notice the other day that he was going to raise this question upon a certain Vote, and upon that Vote he brought the necessary papers to give three precedents from the hon. and learned Member's own administration for the practice which he now condemned. He lost his opportunity the other day, and as he had not repeated his notice to-day he had not

brought those papers with him, but if the hon. and learned Member desired it the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would show him the three precedents he referred to.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Government were responsible.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: What! Did so careful an administrator and such a high legal authority as the hon. and learned Member contend that the Civil Lord to the Admiralty was entitled to raid the Treasury and that he had no responsibility for obedience to the law or for economy in public administration? The doctrine now put forward by the hon. and learned Gentleman threw a flood of light upon the kind of administration they might expect when that Government of economy, so often promised, came to take charge of the national accounts and tried its hand at realising those great economies which they professed themselves able to secure. He thought he had sufficiently defended the Government and himself against the charge that they were introducing laxity into public expenditure. He would only add that, in his opinion, it was of real importance for the efficiency of the public service and for the true interests of economy that the Treasury should have some such power of variation in the appropriations as it now possessed, and that they should have power, subject to being called to account for the way in which they exercised that power, to meet emergencies which could not have been foreseen when the Estimates were prepared. But power of that kind ought to be exercised with the greatest care by the Treasury. He was not aware of what was the evidence upon which the Public Accounts Committee founded their suggestion that this practice was a growing practice, but he would look into that matter. He quite agreed that it ought to be restricted within the narrowest limits compatible with wise administration, with the prudent disposal of the funds in their hands, and with meeting the necessities of the case.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he was glad to hear the last few sentences of the right hon. Gentleman's

Mr. Austen Chamberlain.

speech, because in the rest of his speech he had simply adopted the *tu quoque* line of argument which he, for one, did not think was at all a satisfactory way of treating this subject. The hon. and learned Member for Dundee had called attention to two matters in regard to which there had been a distinct want of proper financial control. He had pointed out that for three months a new method had been adopted of financing the Army out of the Consolidated Fund when no Army money had been put into that fund for that purpose. On the face of it that was an irregularity, and one which was acknowledged by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself and the First Lord of the Treasury at the end of March last. He was, therefore, somewhat surprised to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer devote his speech almost entirely to showing that a similar irregularity had been committed by Liberal Governments during the past twenty years. The right hon. Gentleman omitted to say that a similar irregularity was committed by a Conservative Government in 1886 and 1892. What was the use of such an argument, because they had a right to expect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take up the attitude of the financial purist in this matter? The right hon. Gentleman ought not to attempt to make excuses for such irregularities, and he had tried to draw off the attention of the House by a mere *tu quoque* argument against the hon. and learned Member for Dundee. At the end of March last they were told that these Votes were to be pushed through and that the Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill, which was to contain the Army Vote No. 1, was to be brought forward at an early date after the Easter holidays. There was not the slightest excuse for what was now being done. The action of the right hon. Gentleman showed that the financial business of the country was not being conducted in a proper spirit, and that he was not adhering as rigidly as he possibly could to the due control over public expenditure by the Treasury, and by the House of Commons.

His second point had reference to the initiation of new services during the course of the year out of the Army and Navy Votes. It had been the practice of the

public Departments to initiate, with the consent of the Treasury, during the currency of the year new services with money voted for the Army and Navy. The Public Accounts Committee did not mean to assert that there was any statutory authority for doing so. It was a practice which had grown up and which was increasing. It was a practice to which public attention should be directed in order that it might not further increase. He remembered that the building of a new Admiralty yacht was started in the course of the financial year, without the consent of the House of Commons, out of the savings on other Votes. The Public Accounts Committee called attention to that matter, and it was because this practice was continually going on that a paragraph had been put in the Report of the Committee on the subject. Again, the Chancellor of the Exchequer made a few *tu quoque* observations, and pointed out that similar things had been done by Liberal Governments. That was no answer to the House of Commons. If there was one duty more than another which the Chancellor of the Exchequer should discharge it was that he should be the rigid guardian of the public purse, and the rigid maintainer of the severest maxims regarding the financial control of the House of Commons over public expenditure. That was the least they had a right to expect of him, and it was a matter in which they had been somewhat disappointed that afternoon.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN said he had not seen the evidence on which the paragraph in the Report of the Public Accounts Committee was based.

MR. BUCHANAN said the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the House had not seen all the evidence which had been submitted to the Committee. But the evidence had been cumulative in recent years, and the recommendation which was inserted in the Report of the Committee this year was with the view of securing that the consent of the Treasury should only be given in cases of real emergency. The Committee had reason to suspect from the fact that the practice had so increased latterly that consent had been given to expenditure on services which

could not be properly described as cases of emergency.

***LORD HENRY BENTINCK** (Nottingham, S.) said he wished to bring to the notice of the House and the Financial Secretary to the War Office the hard case of the hand frame work knitters in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire who had been engaged making cotton pants for the cavalry. Hitherto these men had looked to orders from the Government to get a living, but the Government had decided to issue to the troops a cheaper and a machine-made article, the result being that many of these men, who were well advanced in life and some of whom had invested over £100 in machinery, found themselves face to face with either starvation or the workhouse. He did not wish to question the wisdom of the Government's decision, but wished to appeal to the Financial Secretary of the War Office to let these men down as lightly as possible. He could not help thinking that these men had very strong claims upon the War Office. No doubt the Financial Secretary would tell them that it was a dying industry; but that was not exactly the point. The point was that for a considerable number of years the Government had fostered and encouraged this trade by giving orders year after year. If it had not been fostered and encouraged these men who had attained old age would not be still in the trade, but would be occupied in other branches. Some of them were sixty, seventy, and eighty years of age, and found it impossible to get drafted into other parts of the trade. Everything had been done to draft them into other branches. At the end of the South African War they numbered 500. Now that number was reduced to 278. Most of them were working for the miserable wage of 6s. a week, so that it was perfectly obvious that if they could have got into any other trade they would have done so. He was exceedingly grateful to the Financial Secretary for the kindness he had shown in this matter. He had bothered the Financial Secretary a good deal in appealing on behalf of these poor men. Could the hon. Gentleman make some arrangement whereby they might get 8s. or 9s. a week? No doubt the Finan-

cial Secretary had to guard the interests of the taxpayer, but he was sure he would not wish to see these men go into the workhouse.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said he sympathised with the remarks of the noble Lord in regard to the case of the makers of cotton pants for the Army. He trusted that due care would be taken with regard to the contractors chosen to do work for the Army. One of their complaints was that contracts were sometimes given to the wrong men. These unfortunate working men in England who were making cotton pants were being ground down by the unfair terms imposed upon them. Now the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been good enough to throw his ægis over the Minister for War. The right hon. Gentleman said the Ministry which succeeded the present one might perhaps be more efficient and economical. He himself did not think they could possibly be worse in the matter of efficiency than the present Government. But it should not be forgotten that on his side of the House they did not recognise that their leaders were their masters. They kept a careful eye on them. Did hon. Members opposite suppose that hon. Members on his side would have allowed all the evasion and shuffling which they had seen go on for three years? He believed that any Liberal Ministry that could be formed would be most efficient and economical, and what he was perfectly certain of was that, if it was not, it would be attacked by Liberals as boldly and strongly as the Ministry at present in office had been attacked. His complaint in regard to hon. Members opposite was that they were far too servile to their Ministers. No matter what the Government did they were ready to vote for them. They shook their heads in private and regretted that the country was going to the dogs, but when it came to a vote of confidence they rushed into the House and they said they had confidence in those Gentlemen. Next Monday they would have an opportunity of doing that.

This Vote they were now discussing was in the main for Army and Navy stores, and in it was included the pay of the gentlemen who had been suspended

Mr. Buchanan.

or relieved of their duties. Therefore they had surely the right to oppose this Vote at the present moment. They could not go into the question of the Commission which was to be appointed, but circumstances had occurred lately which did not increase their confidence in His Majesty's Government. There were to be investigations in this matter, but they had nothing to do with Royal Commissions. Hon. Members could not divest themselves of the specific duty which they were sent there to perform, and that was to exercise control over the public funds. Ministers were responsible in all respects for what occurred in their respective offices, and not only the particular Minister concerned, but Ministers were collectively responsible. When on a snatch division a Liberal Ministry was defeated on the question of cordite they at once resigned. He believed nothing that could be brought against the present occupants of the Treasury Bench would make them do that, for they thought it was a duty to the country that such able and efficient men should remain in office in order to prevent the country from going to the dogs, and they were supported by hon. Gentlemen opposite.

If there was an occasion when the House ought to watch carefully what was going on it was when they had to deal with stores in South Africa. During the "fifties" there were any amount of Kaffir wars, and there was stupidity and waste in all of them. On the initiative of the Leader of the Opposition, a Committee or Commission was to be appointed to inquire into all these proceedings—he might call it an orgie—in South Africa, and under these circumstances it appeared to him that they could not agree to this Vote. There was a great deal in the air which required to be cleared up. There had evidently been a great deal of criminal negligence and hushing-up in South Africa during the past three years. He should be delighted if, on Monday, the Prime Minister, and the Secretary of State for War, and also the Secretary of State for India, were able to make out a case for themselves. If they did he should welcome it. But the Government should put off this Vote until after Monday. It was

perfectly preposterous to ask the House to pass this Vote, which included the pay of gentlemen against whom a *prima facie* case had been made out. Why not put it off for a week? It might be that there was really a solution of the situation in the air; and that it was felt that it was desirable to consult the country. They were living under the impression that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was hanging on to power and place as long as he could. He would give friendly advice to the right hon. Gentleman to appeal to the country between the hay and the corn harvest. If, after a general election, the country were of opinion that the services of the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues should be retained, then he and his friends must bow to that decision; but the country ought to be left to decide these matters. He thought, however, that the country had shown that it had made up its mind that it was not enamoured of the present Government. In fact, so far as he could understand, the country desired that, so far as the Prime Minister and his Administration were concerned, they should come to an end whenever the constituencies were consulted.

There was one point on which he wished to ask the Prime Minister a Question. He could not quite gather the position of General Lyttelton. Had General Lyttelton sent in his resignation? Was that gallant officer in a state of suspended animation? Was he still a member of the Army Council? They had a right to ask that, because some of the officers implicated in these scandals had been relieved of duty. No one who read the evidence of the Butler Committee would say that that evidence did not equally apply to General Lyttelton, and that that general officer ought to be equally relieved of duty. He would like to have an Answer to that Question.

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) said that since they had last discussed the question of the position of the Militia, he had had the experience of another training and of the conditions under which the Militia were labouring. The feeling was that they were confronted with some kind of transformation which they did not understand. The Militia—officers and men

—wanted to know what their position now was, and what was before them. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that when this question was last before the House, in April last, he said that the Militia were to become a part of the short-service Army.

*MR. SPEAKER: The question of the Militia does not arise here. There is no Vote for the Militia in this Bill.

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS said that in that case he would not pursue the subject.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: May I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill must necessarily apply to the Militia?

*MR. SPEAKER: What I say is that you cannot discuss all the possible services upon this particular Bill. There are only three services included in this Bill; and discussion must be confined to them.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that it was well known and intended, and it was the practice of the House, that money granted in Vote 1 and Vote 7 must be applied to the Militia.

*MR. SPEAKER: That may be so: but the same argument might just as well be applied in Committee of Supply when a certain Vote is voted for a particular purpose. It might be argued that if a portion of money might be applied to other services, the Committee were entitled to discuss all the services to which the money might be applied.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said that the noble Lord had brought before the House the case of a very deserving class of men. He wished to recommend that case to the Financial Secretary to the War Office. It was a matter of very great interest that the noble Lord should have discovered that there were dying industries which were not capable of resurrection. They had heard of a great number of dying industries which had a wonderful way of becoming alive again and being restored to an unusual degree of prosperity. If this hosiery industry was dying it was not because of foreign competition, but

because of the invention of machinery which had greater aptitude for performing work than those artisans who had been engaged all their lives in that particular industry. These men were now reduced to something under 300 and they would be deprived of the means of subsistence if the War Office insisted on demanding a particular form of hosiery for that which had been demanded in former times. There might be a small financial gain if the work of these men, the majority of whom were from fifty to sixty years of age, was taken from them. What they asked was that the War Office should continue to give small orders for this particular kind of hosiery which had been well executed in the past. This was not a large claim to make, and he hoped that the hon. Gentleman would consider it favourably.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (MR. BROMLEY DAVENPORT, Cheshire, Macclesfield) said that he quite expected that this question would be raised, and he did not, of course, complain of its being raised, and particularly of the manner in which it had been dealt with by the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He had not been at all sure, however, from what direction criticism would be levelled against the War Department or that the criticism would be of the kind they had heard from the noble Lord, namely, that the War Office had shown a lack of sympathetic treatment to these workmen, or whether it would be to the effect that sympathetic treatment was out of place in the dealings between the War Office and the men employed under these contracts. The facts were these. This was a very old industry. For a great number of years past, until the South African War, it was an accepted fact that only one kind of hosiery was really suitable and acceptable to the Army and that it must be hand-made. During times of pressure, great encouragement was given to the men to increase their output. A large number of men, as had been said, were drawn into the industry; and some of the older men invested their hard-earned savings in the purchase of machinery. In spite of their efforts, however, the output did not keep

pace with the demand ; and it was then discovered that machine-made articles were good enough for the purpose. In fact they were almost indistinguishable from the hand-made articles, and were very much cheaper. If the hand-made articles were, however, eliminated from the contract that would be extremely hard on the hand workers. Speaking generally, the War Office authorities should not engage in philanthropic or charitable orders. Anyone occupying his position should be confined to the requirements of the Army, and to the cheapest article. For instance, when the establishment was reduced last winter, there were *ad misericordiam* appeals to the War Office not to dismiss men and add to the ranks of the unemployed. These were, however, matters with which he should not be empowered to deal. It was pitiable to hear the complaints, but still his hands ought to be tied in such matters, and he should only be allowed to sanction orders required for the service of the Army. This, however, was an exceptional case. Men who were now old had been engaged in this trade all their lives ; and it was impossible for them to engage in any other. The only question was whether the consideration and assistance rendered to them was sufficient or not. He hoped that the young men, who could get employment elsewhere, would be drawn out of this industry, and that only old men, who could not reasonably expect to obtain other employment would remain. He regretted that the industry must be considered a dying one; but they should try to make the period before extinction as long as possible, out of sympathy with the men. Certain orders would be given, but they would have to be constantly decreasing orders, so that in the end this particular form of industry would have to be discontinued. He could assure hon. Members who had appealed to him that they had his sympathy ; and that he would do all he could in the matter, consistent with his duty to safeguard the interests of the taxpayer.

MR. BOND (Nottingham, E.) said no complaint could be made of the spirit in which the Financial Secretary to the War Office had approached the question. It was a fair and a sympathetic spirit,

and he thought the Financial Secretary's remarks would go far to mitigate the unquestionably hard lot of a number of deserving men. There was one point, however, which had not been dealt with as he should have liked. Practically these men had been kept going for some time past by the Army. They went into the work to supply an article the Army required. They went into the industry with the idea that pants of a particular kind, strong and lasting, would always be required by the Army, and that they could not be made by machinery. That being so, he thought a strong case was made for not throwing the men out in their old age when they had been, not formally of course, but practically the servants of the State for the manufacture of these particular goods. He took his hon. friend's speech to mean that he would continue a sympathetic course to the men, and he hoped that course would be continued by his successors. It was a small concession, but one which he thought justice demanded. He was informed that of 278 men now engaged 231 were over fifty years of age and 121 were over sixty. These men asked to be allowed to earn what was at best only a pittance, and he trusted they might be relieved by what had taken place of the uncertainty under which they must have laboured.

MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said he wished to protest against the reply of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The right hon. Gentleman cynically observed that the House did not realise the gravity of the position. What he wished to point out was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not been exercising due control in the administration of similar Acts. The delay in the introduction of this Bill—which was really a Bill of indemnity—accentuated the matter, especially as regarded Army administration. The transference of money from one Department to another had been stretched to its utmost limits, and the Government had been doing things for which they had no Parliamentary sanction. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he himself drew attention to the fact that a sum of not less than £10,000,000, which had been

voted for terminable charges at the conclusion of the war, had really been applied to the continuation of the war, the Government thereby evading the necessity for an autumn session to get further supplies. The laxity of financial control was at the root of many of the difficulties they had to contend with at the present time in regard to the Army. He wished to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the recent changes at the War Office tended to better the administration of the Army. He thought that the House ought to have a clear statement on that point. The difficulties which had arisen in connection with the fixing of responsibility had accentuated the position; and, therefore, it would be valuable if the Secretary of State would tell the House how they stood in this matter. As far as outsiders could gather, chaos reigned supreme. He should also like to ask whether General Lyttelton had offered to tender his resignation.

*MR. SPEAKER: That does not arise on the Votes included in this Bill.

MR. McCRAE said he understood that the pay of General Lyttelton was included.

*MR. SPEAKER: No. It is on Vote 13.

MR. McCRAE said that the matter was very germane to the condition of the Army generally. He hoped that the Secretary of State would tell the House what was the position of the Army for which this money was being voted. They were in a state of some uncertainty as to the Army, and the sooner a clear and definite statement was made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War with regard to the present scheme of Army reform the better it would be for the country. For his part, he thought if the right hon. Gentleman, with his great power of administration and his great insight into detail, ceased from fancy schemes of Army reform and turned his attention to remedying those great defects which were admitted to exist in the War Office, it would be better for the country. He hoped the right hon.

Gentleman would, however, take this opportunity of laying before the House a statement of the present position, as there was considerable alarm in the country, more especially with regard to the facts that had come out recently as to the conduct of the war in South Africa.

One other point. This Bill dealt with the power of the Treasury to borrow money on Treasury bills. Now that raised the whole question of temporary indebtedness. What he desired to put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that the condition of the Exchequer balances at the present time called for some remark. The Exchequer balances amounted to some £9,000,000, and yet under this Bill they were authorising the right hon. Gentleman to borrow on Treasury bills, while this money was locked up and causing a considerable dislocation in affairs in the City. In his opinion it would be much better if the right hon. Gentleman took the opportunity of redeeming Treasury bills instead of borrowing further, so as to set free the money which was at present locked up.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he did not think that in the course of that day's debate attention had been drawn to the fact that the Consolidated Fund Bill included Vote 7 of the Army Estimates—a Vote for many millions for foreign supplies, of which amount a large part would be spent in South Africa during the coming twelve months. A day or two since the Secretary for War, in reply to a Question, informed the House that some contracts were still running with some of the firms that had been so much in the public mind since the Butler Committee reported, and it would therefore be well for the House to realise that that day it was authorising the Treasury to pay out still further sums under a system which they were all now agreed in condemning. He quite appreciated the reply of the right hon. Gentleman that on June 1st this year he sent out orders that no further contracts should be entered into with these contractors whose conduct had been called in question. Indeed he doubted if they were entitled to make any accusation against

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contractors for securing the biggest possible prices and profits. It was the system of which they complained and yet this Bill proposed to authorise further payments of money under it during the next year. They were told that the current contracts with these firms were only minor ones, but that did not tally with the statement repeatedly made before the Butler Committee as to large contracts for forage, and he did think that before this Bill received Parliamentary sanction they should hear from the Secretary for War that he either had stopped or would stop the system under which obviously there had been so much waste—to put it no stronger than that.

It was clear that unless the right hon. Gentleman had recently taken some step which he had not yet announced, the system of local contracts, which was the origin of all these unpleasant disclosures, must be still existent in South Africa. Something was said the other day about a new system having been set up recently by which it was hoped to prevent a recurrence of the things complained of, and if that were so, then the House should be informed of the fact that the system of local contracts—which involved their being confined closely to certain Johannesburg firms, with a consequent inability on the part of the officers responsible to make really satisfactory contracts—had been stopped, and it should also be told when it was stopped, and what was the nature of the organisation for the purchase of the supplies which would be utilised for the spending of the money the House was now asked to vote. There could be no question more pertinent to this Bill than that, and he hoped they would get a satisfactory reply on the point from the right hon. Gentleman.

He understood it would not be in order to discuss the question of the reported resignation of General Sir Neville Lyttelton, but, seeing that possibly the officer who appeared to have been in supreme command when these difficulties occurred might still have control when the present money was being spent, he thought they might fairly ask a question which apparently

was not covered by a reply given earlier in that sitting—they might fairly ask had General Sir Neville Lyttelton tendered his resignation, or was it the case he had been called upon to do so? They had been told that morning that he had not resigned, but were they to accept that as meaning that his resignation was expected? It certainly was important for the House to know who was going to administer the many millions which under this Bill they were going to authorise the Treasury to pay out.

* MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said that he desired to reply to the various points which had been raised in the course of the debate. His hon. friend the Member for the Isle of Wight referred to two matters—the shortage of officers and the difficulty which he alleged in regard to obtaining recruits. These were, no doubt, very important points, and it would be well for the House to know what the exact facts were. He was glad to say it was not the fact that there was an insuperable difficulty in obtaining recruits. The terms of enlistment had, as the House was aware, been altered, and there was no uncertainty whatever in the minds of recruits as to the conditions upon which they were asked to serve in the Army. It was true that there was a smaller number of recruits this year than last year; but last year was a phenomenal year, and this year two causes had contributed—as the War Office anticipated that they would contribute—to reducing the number of recruits. In the first place no short-service recruits were now taken; and, in the second place, there was a more rigid method of medical examination, and there were stations at which the rejections had risen from 30 per cent. last year to 60 and even 70 per cent. in the present year. Obviously, those two causes combined must reduce—as indeed they were intended to do—the number of men enlisted. Everyone knew that the number of men who in bygone days entered and were compelled to leave the service again, if not in a few months, at any rate in the first year, was very large. He himself greatly preferred the present system to the practice of rejecting men

after they had joined the colours, and after they had been entered as efficient soldiers and cost us a considerable sum for uniforms, etc. They had now enlisted since October 16,000 long-service recruits—that was to say, the equivalent of some twenty battalions of infantry. There was, therefore, he thought, no foundation for the fears to which his hon. and gallant friend had given expression.

With regard to the question of getting officers, of course that was of vital importance. But there was no evidence at the present moment of the falling off alleged. He did not say that a falling off did not exist, and for reasons that were patent. They were going through a transition stage with regard to the Army. But it was not the fact that they were not getting officers; on the contrary, they had considerably over 200 qualified applicants whom, he was sorry to say, they were compelled to refuse because they had not actual house room for them at the Military College at Sandhurst. That was a most unsatisfactory state of things, and they were doing their best to remedy it. They were taking provisional steps by putting a number of cadets into the surplus accommodation at Woolwich. It was not correct to say there was a great scarcity of the commissioned ranks. It was the fact that there was a serious shortage of officers in one branch of the Army, the cavalry, and that question was giving the Army Council the greatest possible concern, and he himself had been a very close student of the problem. The Army Council had obtained the opinions of cavalry officers throughout the service, and they had had a special Committee to consider the point. Whether they would be able to reconcile the many conflicting opinions they had received, and to produce the same supply of officers for the cavalry as they had hitherto been able to produce for the infantry, he did not know; but until that problem had been solved there would be ground for criticism.

With respect to the Guards officers, he disliked as much as anybody any interference with the principle of competitive examination for the service, which had so long been the accepted method of entry; but they had found that the brigade of Guards, one of the most useful military organisations we

possessed in time of war, had suffered from a very serious shortage of officers owing to exceptional causes. Exceptional cases required exceptional remedies; and he would remind the Committee that exactly the same emergency arose in the Navy, that exceptional measures were taken, and that when the emergency had gone by the normal state of things returned.

The hon. and gallant Member had charged him with being responsible for great delay in connection with various transactions which he would not now discuss, but at the proper time he would be able to make it clear that no delay, for which he was responsible, had exceeded twelve hours. As to the employment of discharged soldiers, reference to which had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North-East Manchester, he did not think the case was as bad as it had been made out. All had not been done that ought to be done, but he had put this question in the forefront, and they had not been inactive in regard to it. Last year, in prisons alone, 135 vacancies were given to old soldiers, who also secured twenty-eight appointments as messengers; by the War Office 6,700 old soldiers were employed; and on the railways, no less than 16,000. Out of the registered men whose names were down for employment 68 per cent. obtained it. And the most satisfactory fact of all was that, out of 25,498 men of good character who had been discharged into civil life, 21,815 had got situations. He did not rest content with that, for if a man's character had been good he ought to be certain of obtaining employment; but there was not so much cause for dissatisfaction as had been suggested.

The hon. Member for Halifax had asked a Question which, although but remotely connected with the subject they were discussing, might, he thought, be legitimately discussed on its merits—as to the contracts which had been made recently in South Africa. The hon. Member had asked whether they were going to continue the system of local contracts. He thought there was some small confusion of thought with regard to this subject. The local contracts which had been impugned were not

impugned because they were local contracts, but because the whole of the circumstances under which they were made were special. It was alleged that they were not subject to adequate review and that they were not made in accordance with any regular system. He did not think it was possible to have a system which would prohibit the making of local contracts. It had been pressed on him over and over again in that House, and on his predecessors, that they should make local contracts in this country. There were articles, such as forage and provisions, which must necessarily be furnished by local contractors; and he was quite certain if any prohibition of local contracts were insisted upon, there would arise what he believed would be a just outcry throughout the length and breadth of the land—an outcry which the House of Commons would be very ready to support.

With regard to the South African contracts which had been alluded to, he had only to repeat what he said yesterday. There had been contracts, and there were contracts which had been given, by open tender, to firms whose integrity and good faith had been impugned by the recent Report. He had not the slightest reason to suppose that they could be questioned in any way, they were for small amounts, for a very small portion of our supplies. But he did hold, as much as any one, that in these matters they must be above suspicion. The moment he saw that the proceedings of these firms were impugned he decided that there should be no more contracts with them. He did not wait for any prompting in the House, but telegraphed immediately that there should be no more contracts with these firms until their dealings with the War Office had been cleared up.

The hon. Member for Halifax had also asked a Question with regard to general organisation for buying and selling. He would like to point out that the War Office had been the object of much obloquy, but it was not so incompetent as some hon. Members supposed. All those who had studied the history of our past wars knew perfectly well that the organisation of the Army in this country had not been an organisation comparable with that of any

great military State—that we had been content to rub through our difficulties in a way which no human being called scientific. Certainly, if there had been one thing more impressed on his mind than another it was that in a considerable number of the subsidiary branches of the Army, among them those connected with supply and financial administration, we had had nothing comparable with the organisation which existed in some foreign armies. It was true, in his opinion, that the system which existed three, four or five years ago for supplying the Army, and for controlling the financial arrangements of an army in the field were inadequate. He believed they were inadequate because there was no properly organised staff during the time of war, and it had been the task of the Army Council to try to prevent a recurrence of that state of things, which they all deplored. They had been engaged for the last fifteen months in building up a system which, he believed, ought to enable the Army to take the field in any subsequent war without fear of the recurrence of any abuses of that kind. The system was a very simple one. They were now decentralising the contract and pay branches. He had been asked whether he thought the changes in the administration of the War Office had done good or harm. He honestly believed that they had all been framed in accordance with business principles, and he thought it was a business principle that they should decentralise their organisation as they had done.

Let him explain to the House how he saw the operation of this system. We had one Army corps at Aldershot; we had in connection with that Army corps a contract staff. They were engaged every day in the work of supplying the wants of the Aldershot army corps. When war broke out what would happen would be that the army corps would be transferred to the seat of war, and with it would go the whole of the contract staff which had been trained to do the work at home. If operations at all comparable in their scale to those which took place recently were carried on, he believed that much advantage would be derived from the financial adviser of the War Office accompanying

the general in the field. Every general in the field ought to have at his disposal a skilled financial staff who could relieve him of a great deal of the work which his own experience had not fitted him to perform, and which in the stress of war was not, perhaps, regarded as very important, but which, when the bill came to be paid, was all-important. He might be too sanguine, but he believed the Army Council had made such arrangements in the organisation of the contract and other branches of the Army as would enable them to say with some confidence that they would not be deceived in their hopes. In the contingency of a campaign involving enormous financial transactions that would require a very considerable knowledge of business, of the circumstances affecting the market, of the method of making purchases, and of the way by which the best value could be got for one's money, and that knowledge he believed the new system would supply.

He did not think he had very much more to answer. His hon. friend the Member for the Isle of Wight had spoken about what he conceived to be the shortage of officers; he had stated that uncertainty and discouragement existed. He himself believed that the sooner all uncertainties were removed the better, and he was as anxious about the matter as his hon. friend was. He thought it would not be long before this end was accomplished. He felt, however, very strongly that if one thing more than another could be selected as the reason for discouragement among officers, it was the indiscriminate use of hard words, in the House and outside, with regard to the Army. To speak of "widespread corruption" was, he thought, to use the sort of language that was discouraging to officers. We had no evidence of widespread corruption. He did not believe in widespread corruption. Let critics pick out individuals if they pleased, let them pick out politicians if they pleased, and charge them with crimes which they could bring home to their doors. But he begged the House to desist from these general charges either of incompetence or corruption. They were not sustainable, and if

not sustainable they ought not to be made. They did far more than any blunders he might make or the system might have produced to discourage officers in the Army on whose services we should need to rely in time of war.

MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) expressed his surprise at hearing that, so far as the Secretary for War was concerned, there had not been twelve hours delay in dealing with the supplies question. The other day in answer to a Question the right hon. Gentleman said he discontinued the employment of certain contractors on 1st June this year. But in the Report of the Controller and Auditor-General, in the Report of the Appropriation Account of the Army, circulated in the House on 10th March this year, the whole circumstances in connection with these contracts were set out at length, and the right hon. Gentleman must have had knowledge of them many months before.

*MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: My Answer was correct. The day I became aware that any charge was levelled against these persons I caused a Committee of inquiry to be appointed. The moment that Committee reported I circulated its Report, and the moment I received the evidence of the Committee I took the action to which the hon. Gentleman refers. I do not think anybody in my place could have acted more promptly. I do not think anybody would suppose I could act without having the information I had.

MR. McKENNA still thought the right hon. Gentleman did not appreciate his point. It was true that on the issue of the Butler Report he discontinued the employment of certain contractors, but the right hon. Gentleman was as capable of getting at the facts as the Butler Committee, and he actually had them within his knowledge. It was true that the Butler Committee stated the facts in stronger language than the Report of the Controller and Auditor-General, but the facts were shown by the latter. There was one paragraph in the Report—known to the right hon. Gentleman

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eight months ago—regarding a case in which oats were sold by the War Office for 11s., and the same oats were bought by the War Office for 17s. 10d., and sales by the War Office took place to enable the contractor to carry out his contract at 17s. 10d. That was the strongest case mentioned in the Butler Report, and it was brought to the knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman eight months ago, but for those eight months the employment of the contractors was continued. It was too late for the Secretary of State to shield himself behind the Committee. It was his duty to supervise these plain matters, and it was not necessary to wait for the Report of any Committee before putting an end to the possibility of such practices being repeated.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) drew attention to the treat-

ment of officers who received commissions during the stress of the South African War, many of whom had been driven out of the Army owing to their inability to meet examination requirements. Some of these men were between thirty and forty years of age, and, not having had the advantage of a course of training at Sandhurst, they were unable to pass a technical examination for promotion. He asked whether the Government intended to maintain their unyielding attitude towards these officers, and also whether the same treatment was to be continued as in the past on the question of pay.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 126; Noes, 89. (Division List No. 206.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
 Allhusen, Augustus Henry
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Arnold-Forster, Rt.Hn. Hugh O.
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
 Bain, Colonel James Robert
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manc'r)
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
 Banbury, Sir Frederick George
 Bartley, Sir George C. T.
 Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Bill, Charles
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bond, Edward
 Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
 Campbell, Rt. Hn. J.A. (Glasgow)
 Cautley, Henry Strother
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J.A. (Worc.)
 Chapman, Edward
 Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coddington, Sir William
 Coghil, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Colston, Chas. Ed. H. Athole
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davenport, Wm. Bromley
 Dickson, Charles Scott
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
 Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Egerton, Hn. A. de Tatton
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r)
 Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
 Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.

Finlay, Sir R.B. (Inverness B'ghs)
 Fisher William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
 Flower Sir Ernest
 Forster, Henry William
 Foster, Philip S (Warwick, S.W.)
 Garfit, William
 Gordon, Hn. J.E. (Elgin & Nairn)
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury)
 Greene, Sir E.W. (Bry. S. Edm'nds)
 Hamilton, Marq. of (Lind's derry)
 Hardy, L. (Kent, Ashford)
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harris, F. Leverton ('Tynem'th)
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Helder, Augustus
 Hoare, Sir Samuel
 Hogg, Lindsay
 Hope, J.F. (Sheffield, Brightside)
 Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
 Kimber, Sir Henry
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Law Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
 Lee, A. H. (Hants., Fareham)
 Legge, Col. Hn. Heneage
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S.)
 Lonsdale, John Brownlee
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas, Ccl. F. (Lowestoft)
 Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsmouth)
 M'Ever, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh, W.)
 Marks, Harry Hananel
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H.E. (Wigt'n)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 Morrison, James Archibald

Morton, A. H. Aylmer
 Mount, Wm. Arthur
 Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 O'Neill, Hn. Robert Torrens
 Parker, Sir Gilbert
 Pease, Herb. Pike (Darlington)
 Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
 Pemberton, John S. G.
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Plummer, Sir Walter R.
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rasch, Sir Frederick Carne
 Renshaw, Sir Chas. Bine
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Roberts Samuel (Sheffield)
 Robertson, Herb. (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
 Round, Rt. Hn. James
 Roys, Clement Molyneux
 Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
 Samuel, Sir H. S. (Limehouse)
 Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
 Sharpe, Wm. Edward T.
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Sloan, Thomas Henry
 Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs)
 Stroyan, John
 Strutt, Hn. Chas. Hedley
 Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
 Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
 Tuke, Sir John Batty
 Walrand, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
 Warde, Colonel C. E.

Welby, Lt.-Col. A.C.E. Taunton
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Wilson, John (Glasgow)

Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham-Quin, Col. W. H.
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Sir
Alexander Acland-Hood and
Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Black, Alexander William
Blake, Edward
Bright, Allan Heywood
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, N.E. (York, N.R. Whitby)
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cheetham, John Frederick
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
Dobbie, Joseph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Ellice, Capt EC (S. Andrew's Bgh's)
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (Maidstone)
Fenwick, Charles
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher

Freeman-Thomas, Captain F.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herb. John
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Higham, John Sharp
Holland, Sir Wm. Henry
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
London, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
McCrae, George
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mooney, John J.
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (Montrose)
Murphy, John
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Col. J. P. (Galway, N.)
O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid.)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
Parrott, William

Paulton, James Mellor
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, John Wynford
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (Dumfries)
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (Northants)
Sullivan, Donal
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Williams, Osmond (Merion)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh, N.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—
Major Seely and Mr.
McKenna.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed
for Monday next.

EAST INDIA LOANS (RAILWAYS).

Considered in Committee.

[Mr. HARDY (Kent, Ashford) upon
the Motion of Mr. A. J. Balfour, took the
Chair as Deputy Chairman.]

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That it is expedient to authorise the
Secretary of State in Council of India to
raise in the United Kingdom on the
security of the Revenues of India, by
the creation and issue of capital stock,
bonds, debentures, or bills, a sum not
exceeding £20,000,000, for the following
purposes—

- (a) The construction, extension, and
equipment of railways in India by
State Agency or through the
Agency of Companies.

- (b) The repayment of the principal
of any bonds or debentures issued
by any such company under the
guarantee of the Secretary of
State.

- (c) The discharge of any obligation
incurred by the Secretary of State
by reason of the purchase of any
railway or the determination of
any contract from or with such
company."—(Mr. Secretary Brod-
rick).

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.)
thought that in reference to a proposal
of so far-reaching a character some ex-
planation ought to be given by the
Secretary of State. The Committee had no
knowledge of the terms of the Resolution
except by hearing it read from the Chair,
and under such circumstances it was im-
possible adequately to comprehend its im-
port. It was the more necessary that a
statement should be made on the present
occasion, since, under the Standing Order
recently passed, the Report stage could be
taken after midnight, which meant that

practically only in Committee could there be any real discussion. It was true that there would be a Bill with its various stages, but the procedure connected with the introduction of the Resolution in Committee of Ways and Means had been devised in order that Parliament might adequately discuss such matters before sanctioning the expenditure. In the discussion on the Indian Budget, the right hon. Gentleman stated his policy with regard to railways, and he would admit that Members on the Opposition side had shown every desire to co-operate with him. It had been said that they got too little time for the discussion of Indian affairs. Now they had a good opportunity of discussing this section of Indian affairs, and it would only be consistent with the position they took up on the Amendment moved when going into Committee that they should now take an intelligent interest with regard to this proposal before the Committee. No doubt the Secretary for India would be able to explain the policy he had in contemplation, and possibly he might be able to give them some very good reasons for the step he was now taking. They wished to know exactly what railway development he had in contemplation. Surely he could not be asking for this Vote of £20,000,000 without having thought out the whole scheme. He assured the right hon. Gentleman that he would get his proposal through all the quicker if he would give them a full statement of his policy, and how he was going to develop it. On the other hand, if he simply gave them a few platitudes instead of a full explanation he could hardly expect to get his proposal through without some opposition.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said the hon. Member opposite had every right to ask for an explanation, and had he anticipated that the House would have desired at this stage to know the precise purposes of this loan he would have been prepared with a fuller statement. It was already within the knowledge of all Members who took an interest in Indian finance that India had a large number of railways worked by companies whose charter provided that when time had been allowed them to obtain the

profits to which they were entitled the Indian taxpayers should resume their rights and claim their share of these profits. The time had arrived for taking over one or two undertakings. There was a loan now running from which the ordinary borrowing of the Government of India could be made for the extension of railways. The last loan was raised in 1901, and there was a previous loan in 1898. The present loan was for a larger amount than on previous occasions, because it was now time to purchase the Bombay and Baroda Railway.

MR. CALDWELL: Then why do you not go into the general details of it?

*MR. BRODRICK said he could not give details, nor would it be desirable to do so. A margin was taken for the continuance of the policy of railway extensions, on which so strong and favourable a verdict was pronounced by both sides of the House the other evening. He had no desire to keep anything back. The proposals involved about 1,000 miles of railways each year and an expenditure of £5,000,000 or £6,000,000. They proposed to work upon the lines which he indicated to the Committee two evenings ago. Their desire was to give India such advantage as British capital could give in the prudent development of its railway policy, and he did not doubt that when the Bill was before the House it would receive the general assent of both Parties.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) asked the Secretary of State for India to supplement his statement by one or two further particulars. He wished to know what was the amount of unexpended capital for railway purposes and the proportion of the £20,000,000 to be spent on the purchase of the Bombay-Baroda Railway and on further extension of railways in India. He allowed that the House generally was in favour of the railway policy of the Indian Government, and that it had proved on the whole profitable both financially and from a political and economical point of view; but they should be assured that a sufficient amount of money was included in this sum for the further development of new railways in those parts of the country which were liable to famine. From the

terms of the Resolution it appeared that there were other purposes to which this loan was to be applied. What were these purposes, and did the Government contemplate the purchase of other railways?

*MR. BRODRICK said the sum remaining over from the loan of 1898 at the time the Bill was drawn was £1,000,000, and from the loan "for the service of the Government of India" generally £7,400,000. That was, of course, subject to the charge for construction of railways really commenced, and for which the money had not been actually borrowed when the Bill was drawn. The Bengal Central Railway Company as well as the Bombay-Baroda and Central Indian Railway had come into contemplation this year for purchase. The Southern Mahratta Railway, the Madras Railway, and others could be purchased in the future, although it had not yet been indicated whether the Secretary of State would do so. The other purposes which the loan covered were general railway purposes.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) complained that the Committee were again in the serious position of discussing they knew not what. This always happened now in money Committees. The old practice was not to make a Motion which would fetter the House until the subject-matter had been fully explained and discussed. A practice had grown up of dealing with enormous sums of money upon a proposition read from the Chair which few Members heard, and still fewer understood. Upon this proposals were passed through Committee involving large sums of money. In the present instance the Resolution involved no less a sum than £20,000,000, and very few Members of the Committee could repeat the statement to which they were asked to assent. He had often appealed to Ministers when they brought forward Resolutions of this kind to have a few slips prepared and passed round upon which the amount and conditions might be stated.

*MR. BRODRICK said he would have acted on the suggestion had he received it earlier, and he should be pleased to do so in the future.

Mr. Buchanan.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he was much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his promise, and he would not now trouble the House with the further interesting remarks he had intended to make.

MR. CALDWELL said that the Secretary of State for India had come down to the House with all the papers in his box but he had not got the information they required in his head. That was always the case. He scarcely ever remembered an instance where a Resolution of this kind in Committee had been placed before them with a formal explanation. They were told that they would get the information when the Bill came forward, but when that occurred they generally found that their discussions were very much restricted. The right hon. Gentleman was trying to shelter himself from giving information by saying that it was not advisable to divulge the price, but there were a great many other things which he might tell them, the particulars of which he had got in his box. He thought it was very important that the Committee should know what changes the Government were going to make in view of their becoming the owners of the Bombay-Baroda Railway. Were they going to work the railway by their own servants under their own direct management? He knew several railways which were now being worked upon that principle. There was a narrow gauge line in connection with this railway at Ahmedabad and he wished to know whether that would also come under the control of the State at the same time as the Bombay-Baroda Railway. Was it part of the bargain made by the Government in purchasing the Bombay-Baroda line to purchase also this narrow gauge line? They would like to know what had been the result of the working of the guarantee in connection with this line and whether they had been working it at a loss. If so would the right hon. Gentleman state what the loss had been to the Government. No doubt he had got the information in his box.

*MR. BRODRICK: The box is empty.

MR. CALDWELL said the next thing he should like some information about

was how were they going to work the Bombay-Baroda line under their purchase agreement. He understood the railway had been purchased upon a certain actuarial principle which would work out mathematically, and it was not a definite fixed sum. He agreed that there might be considerable difference of opinion with regard to the method of arriving at the price to be paid for this railway, but surely the Secretary of State for India would agree that it was a very remarkable thing to ask the Committee to approve of the purchase of a line without knowing what the cost was going to be. In regard to this transaction the only thing that was left indefinite was the price. Why they should be asked to supply the money before the price was fixed was to him somewhat incomprehensible. Would it not have been better for the Secretary of State for India to have got his price fixed and then have come down to the House to get the necessary authority to borrow the money.

They wished to know whether they were going to raise the £20,000,000 now or would there be certain stages at which they proposed to raise the money. There should be no difficulty in answering that Question and the information could be given without giving any indication as to how much was being given for the different railways. If the right hon. Gentleman looked at the method in which they raised this money he would find that they had a double plan. As a rule so much of the money was raised in India at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest and the other portion was raised in this country at 3 per cent. Would the Secretary of State for India inform the Committee the amount which he proposed to raise at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in India and what amount at 3 per cent. in this country? If the right hon. Gentleman would look at the transactions of last year he would find that he got more money at 3 per cent. in this country and rather less money at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in India. That fact was shown in the right hon. Gentleman's own explanatory statement issued in connection with the Indian Budget. That was the only conclusion one could come to from the explanatory statement and the figures which were given. Why

was it that the borrowing was to be divided—£10,000,000 to be borrowed in India from time to time at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and £10,000,000 to be borrowed in this country at 3 per cent.? It was most important that the House should know the price to be paid for the money. If a man could get $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent by lending in India, which was practically a cash basis country, why should he take 3 per cent. here? Who were the parties who would lend the money in India? If the money could be obtained in this country at 3 per cent. why pay more anywhere else?

In regard to the making of new railways he was not one of those who thought that the only thing to be considered was whether they would pay. There were very few railways in India now which were not under the State, and, though a new line might not pay, it might be good policy to have it because it acted as a feeder, and brought to other parts of the system profits which otherwise would not be got. Apart from the question of finance, railways in India had another value. They helped to develop the districts which they traversed and they provided facilities for bringing produce to the market.

*MR. BRODRICK said he was sure the hon. Member would acquit him of any desire not to give information. The last half of the hon. Member's speech dealt with a subject which he himself had dealt with most fully a few nights ago. They had alternative methods of purchasing this railway. To state in the House what would be the method that would be adopted, whether it would be by paying a particular sum or by creating a particular class of stock, would lead to an amount of speculation which it would be impossible to contemplate for a moment. All they were now asking for was the authority of the House to exercise an option which was granted some years ago. They did not propose to raise the whole of the £20,000,000 at once. They could not put so large a loan on the market without creating a disturbance that they would all regret. No doubt there was a difference of a half per cent. between the rate in India and the rate in this country. On the other hand, it was of the essence

of good finance and the national prosperity of any country that a large amount of its indebtedness should be indebtedness to the country itself, and not to foreigners. The Government had full regard to these points. They did not propose to issue £20,000,000, or anything like it, in a hurry.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said he agreed with the hon. Member for King's Lynn that it was undesirable to proceed with that discussion without further information, and without any statement as to whether this loan was to be put on the market in the ordinary way, or whether it was to be issued, not in exchange for cash in the market, but in the form of bonds for the purchase of this railway. It was important that the Committee should have that information before being asked to come to a conclusion as to the issuing of the loan. To authorise the issue of a loan which was to be placed on the market, was a different thing from authorising a loan which was to be handed over to the owners of the railway in exchange for the railway.

*MR. BRODRICK said that was one of the points in regard to which it was desirable that the Government should have a free hand until they came to the completion of the negotiations.

MR. BLACK said in that case the Resolution should be delayed until they came to the completion of the negotiations.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise in the United Kingdom on the security of the revenues of India, by the creation and issue of capital stock, bonds, debentures, or bills, a sum, not exceeding £20,000,000, for the following purposes:—(a) The construction, extension, and equipment of railways in India by state agency, or through the agency of companies; (b) the repayment of the principal of any bonds or debentures issued by any such com-

Mr. Brodrick.

pany under the guarantee of the Secretary of State; (c) The discharge of any obligations incurred by the Secretary of State by reason of the purchase of any railway or the determination of any contract from or with such company.—(Mr. Secretary Brodrick.)

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

NAVAL LANDS (VOLUNTEERS) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. HARDY (Kent, Ashford) in the Chair.]

Clause 1:—

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) moved to omit the words, "as amended by any subsequent enactment," so as to limit the Bill to the application of the Military Lands Act, 1892, which gave power for the purchase of land, and of land only. There was a certain amount of difficulty in discussing this Bill in respect that it was a one clause measure which proposed to apply three different Acts to the Naval Volunteers. Therefore, it was practically three Bills rolled into one. The Government could have brought in a Bill dealing with the Naval Volunteers alone, but instead of that they had adopted the method of reference. He supposed the meaning of that was that they desired to shut out the opportunity of making any Amendment, and that they might be enabled to carry an enormously big Bill without difficulty. He did not think that was a reasonable method. The Act of 1892, and subsequent Acts in regard to military lands, had no necessary connection with the Naval Volunteers. The powers given by the 1892 Act were limited solely to the purchase of land in the United Kingdom. The Act which was passed in 1897 enabled Volunteer corps to borrow money for the purpose of erecting buildings and permanent works; and in 1900 an Act was passed which enabled the council of a county or

borough to lease land to any Volunteer corps for military purposes for a period not exceeding ninety-nine years, powers were conferred on Volunteer corps to borrow from the Public Works Loan Commissioners to the extent of a lease so made, and the Act further provided that if a Volunteer corps was disbanded the lease was to vest in the Secretary of State in the same way as the land would vest in him. In 1903 an Act was passed which introduced a new method, namely, that instead of a Volunteer corps purchasing land as provided for under the 1892 Act, or leasing land as provided for under the 1900 Act, the council of a county or borough were themselves empowered to lease land for a period of not less than twenty-one years and then to borrow in respect of that lease. There was, therefore, a distinct issue raised by his Amendment. It would eliminate from the present Bill the Acts to which he had referred, and go back to the position created by the 1892 Act, which only gave powers for the purchase of land. He ventured to say that if the Amendment were carried the Government would have all the powers that were required in regard to the acquisition of land for the Naval Volunteers. He maintained that the money of local authorities should not be employed in providing permanent naval works. That was essentially an Imperial purpose.

The reason, stated for getting this Bill passed was that there was some land which the Clyde Trustees were quite willing to sell or lease for naval purposes. When he was asked in regard to this matter he said distinctly that he had no objection to that, because it would enable the local authorities to sell the land or to lease it, which, but for this Bill, they could not do. His Amendment did not touch at all anything connected with that power. When land had been obtained under the Military Lands Act of 1892 they could not erect on that land anything for the use of Naval Volunteers, such as sheds for guns, or even a drill hall. This Bill was an evolution from the Military Lands Acts of 1892-1900, and allowed the local authorities to erect a drill hall. Now, he always considered that the proper place to drill Naval Volunteers was on board ship.

If the Naval Volunteers were to be properly exercised, that was an expense which should be borne by the State as a whole and not by the local authorities. Supposing a corps of Naval Volunteers was disbanded, the local authorities would be burdened with the sheds for ammunition, guns, or other material for which there would be no use. If the land was provided what else did they want for Naval Volunteers? It might be used for a rifle range, but why should not the State, as a State, provide a rifle range out of the funds of the State?

THE CHAIRMAN said that the hon. Gentleman must confine himself to the discussion of the Amendment.

MR. CALDWELL said that was exactly what he was endeavouring to do. He had been exceedingly careful to point out that under the Military Lands Act power was given to purchase land, and the subsequent Acts gave power to erect buildings at the expense of the local authorities. He did not object to the purchase of land but to the erection of buildings for Naval Volunteers at the expense of the local authorities. If his Amendment were carried the Admiralty would still have practically everything they required—everything, at any rate, they ought to have. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 1, line 5, to leave out the words ‘as amended by any subsequent enactment.’”
—(Mr. Caldwell.)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause.”

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARTHUR LEE, Hampshire, Fareham) said he was afraid the Government were unable to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member, who wished, in short, to limit the power of the Admiralty under this Bill to the purchase of land only. The hon. Member objected to money being raised to erect drill halls, which were most

essential to the efficient training of Naval Volunteers. The hon. Member cited an individual case where only land was required: but it was obviously undesirable to legislate for individual cases. The measure should be of universal application. The hon. Member had said that the Naval Volunteers did not want buildings on the land acquired; but that was a new theory. A drill hall for the Naval Volunteers was required in exactly the same way as for Military Volunteers.

He could not see any distinction between the two. The hon. Gentleman said that when land was appropriated for Naval Volunteer purposes it lost value; but even if that were the case, the land would not be of less value than land remote from the sea front.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 153; Noes, 82. (Division List No. 207.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hn. George
Anson, Sir Wm. Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds
Palfour, Kenneth R. (Shropsh.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harwood
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bousfield, Wm. Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.
Brymer, William Ernest
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cantley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.
Cayzer, Sir Chas. William
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chapman, Edward
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dairymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Dorington, Rt. Hn. Sir John E.
Douglas, Rt. Hn. A. Akers-
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manch'r
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.

Finlay, Sir R. B. (Inv'n'm'ss B'ghs
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (Warwick, S.W.
Garfit, William
Gordon, Maj. Evans (Tr'H'm'ts
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, Sir EW. (B'rySEdm'nds
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Marq. of (L'nd'nderry
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, F. Leverton (Tynem'th
Helder, Augustus
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Hope, J. F. (Sheffield, Brightside
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Howard, J. (Midd., Tottenham
Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
Jebb, Sir Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Knowles, Sir Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (Glasgow)
Lawrence, Sir J. (Monm'th)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S.
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Bristol, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (Lowestoft)
Lucas, Reginald J. (Portsm'th)
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Malcolm, Ian
Manners, Lord Cecil
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir H. E. (Wigt'n)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens

Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Plummer, Sir Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretymann, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (Sheffield)
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Herb. L. (Cleveland)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (Isle of Wight
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, Sir H. (Renfrew)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas. (Somerset
Stanley, Rt. Hn. Lord (Lancs
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hn. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Turnour, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Welby, Lt.-Col. A. CE. (Taunton).
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, John (Glasgow)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
Alexander Acland-Hood and
Viscount Valentia.

Mr. Arthur Lee.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
 Ambrose, Robert
 Asher, Alexander
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Atherley-Jones, L.
 Black, Alexander William
 Bright, Allan Heywood
 Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burns, John
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, N.E. (York, NR, Whitby)
 Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Cheetham, John Frederick
 Churchill, Winston Spencer
 Craig, Robert Hunter (Lanark)
 Cremer, William Randal
 Delany, William
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Duncan, J. Hastings
 Ellice, Capt EC (SAndrew's B'ghs)
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
 Eve, Harry Trelawney
 Fenwick, Charles
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)

Higham, John Sharp
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Labouchere, Henry
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cornwall)
 Layland-Barratt, Francis
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Lewis, John Herbert
 London, W.
 Lyell, Charles Henry
 MacVeagh, Jeremiah
 M'Crae, George
 M'Killop, W. (Sligo, North)
 M'Laren, Sir Chas. Benjamin
 Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
 Murphy, John
 Nannetti, Joseph P.
 Nolan, Col. John P. (Galway, N.)
 O'Brien, K. (Tipperary Mid)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
 O'Malley, William
 Parrott, William
 Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
 Perks, Robert William
 Philipps, John Wynford
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Price, Robert John

Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Russell, T. W.
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
 Shipman, Dr. John G.
 Slack, John Bamford
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Stanhope, Hn. Philip James
 Strachey, Sir Edward
 Sullivan, Donal
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Thomson, F. W. (York, W. R.)
 Tomkinson, James
 Toulmin, George
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Wason, Eugene (Clackmannan)
 Weir, James Galloway
 White, Luke (York, E. R.)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Wills, Arthur Walters (NDorset)
 Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr.
 Caldwell and Mr. Dobbie.

MR. CALDWELL said he wished to move the omission of the words "corps or other bodies of." From a drafting point of view it would be better if they were omitted. The Amendment would make the Bill more comprehensive, and he did not move it in any hostile spirit.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 7, to leave out the words 'corps or other bodies of.'"—(Mr. Caldwell.)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said it would be more convenient to retain the words. The other bodies in the clause referred to detachments of divisions.

MR. CALDWELL said he did not ask the hon. Gentleman to accept the Amendment now; but it could be made in another place. From his experience of drafting, he knew that the more com-

prehensive the words were the better, and the greater the power that was given. It was not a Party matter at all. He would act similarly were the Liberal Party in power.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that the Bill was restricted, and, therefore, very objectionable. Moreover, the slipshod method of drafting was something marvellous. "Corps" was simply a French word for "body." Why the English word "body" could not be used he could not imagine. The words were pleonastic, and should be omitted. What were "other bodies"? No definition of the words had been given. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would not withdraw the Amendment. The powers proposed to be given under the Bill were improper and dangerous powers, which should be definitely restricted to the particular bodies concerned. The Bill proposed that Naval Volunteers should be empowered to buy land; if they were empowered to buy the sea he could understand it.

Question put.

The Committee divided. Ayes, 148;
Noes 85. (Division List No. 208.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, ames Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. H. O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour Rt Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (Christch.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood.
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Lt.-Col. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (Shropsh.)
Brymer, William Ernest
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow)
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
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Campbell, John (Armagh, S.)
Channing, Francis Allston
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Doogan, P. C.
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Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton

Harmsworth, R. Leicester
 Higham, John Sharp
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Labouchere, Henry
 Langley, Batty
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 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Lewis, John Herbert
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 McLaren, Sir Chas. Benjamin
 Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
 Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
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 Woodhouse, Sir J.T (Huddersf d)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr.
 Gibson Bowles and Mr.
 Joseph Walton.

Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES said that Clause 1 was the Bill. In his view it was a Bill which ought not to pass; and, therefore, he felt it his bounden duty to oppose it on two grounds. Firstly, the Naval Volunteers ought not to exist at all; and secondly, if they did exist, they should not be given any borrowing powers for the purposes specified in the Bill. Naval Volunteers had been tried before, and had been abandoned; while the Admiralty neglected recruiting for the Royal Naval Reserve, which was a real and most admirable body. Let it be assumed that the scheme was as acceptable as he believed it to be ridiculous. Even then why should the Naval Volunteers be recommended to get into debt? Why should they acquire land? What they wanted was not land and buildings, but water and ships. He could quite understand Military Volunteers requiring land—a sort of small Salisbury Plain—on which to conduct their drill; but what did Naval Volunteers want land for? Another objection he had to the measure was that it was one of those financial Bills which he thought the House of Commons had made up its mind to reject. No one could tell what the Bill meant. It consisted of only one clause, and that was completely unintelligible. It substituted the Admiralty for the Secretary of State, and the Navy for the Army. He had constantly repeated his request, when a referential Bill was introduced,

that it should be accompanied by the main Bill, as was done by the late Sir William Harcourt. That excellent precedent had been lost sight of. He believed that the Bill meant an absolutely wanton and unnecessary expenditure; and that it was one of those adventures which ambitious Under-Secretaries were allowed to embark on on the chance of their making some reputation if they succeeded and doing no harm if they failed. The House, he submitted, ought not to do anything to encourage these Naval Volunteers, who had only been instituted in order to supersede the real Naval Reserve of the country. The Bill was further objectionable by reason of its elusive and referential character, and he would do his best to prevent it being passed into law.

Mr. CALDWELL said that that Bill was one which it was impossible for the Committee generally to understand. He would point out one important matter which was involved. The measure proposed to empower county councils and borough councils to purchase land out of the funds of the local ratepayers, and to erect permanent buildings for naval and military purposes. Surely the entire country, and not a locality, ought to provide for its Imperial obligations.

And, it being half-past Five of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress, to sit again Monday next.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (CHILDREN)
BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) appealed to the House to permit the Second Reading of the Bill to pass.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) : I object.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said he wished to appeal to the hon. Gentleman not to persist in his objection.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.) said he also desired to appeal to his hon. friend.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said he would entreat the hon. Gentleman not to persist in his objection.

Second Reading deferred till Friday next.

PLACES OF WORSHIP ENFRANCHISE-
MENT BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Objection being taken,

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid.) said that the Bill was a most useful one, and had been previously passed by the House of Commons. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would not persist in his objection.

Second Reading deferred till Monday next.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, in pursuance of Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

PUBLIC BILLS

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Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Advertisement Regulations [H.L.]	<i>Lord Balfour of Burleigh</i>	Report 8th June (1059)
*Agricultural Rates Act 1896 Continuance	<i>Lord Kenyon</i>	Read 1 ^a 2nd June (546)
*Bills of Exchange Act 1882 Amendment	<i>Lord Chancellor</i>	Read 2 ^a 5th June (628) Committee } 6th June (826) Report
Closing of Licensed Premises (Christmas Day) (Ireland)	<i>Lord Avebury</i>	Read 3 ^a and passed 8th June (1039) Committee 30th May (192)
Criminal Cases (Reservation of Points of Law)	<i>Lord Chancellor</i>	Committee 8th June (1057)
*Extradition [H.L.]	<i>Lord Chancellor</i>	Committee } 30th May (192) Report Read 3 ^a and passed 2nd June (546)
*Finance		Read 1 ^a 6th June (826)
Intoxicating Liquors (Hours of Closing)	<i>Lord Archbishop of Canterbury</i>	2nd Reading defeated 29th May (5)
*Naval and Military Medals [H.L.]	<i>Earl of Donoughmore</i>	Report 2nd June (546) Read 3 ^a and passed 5th June (624)
*Supreme Court of Judica- ture Ireland (No. 1) [H.L.]	<i>Lord Ashbourne</i>	Read 3 ^a and passed 8th
*Supreme Court of Judica- ture Ireland (No. 2) [H.L.]	<i>Lord Ashbourne</i>	Committee 30th May (192) Report 8th June (1059)
Workmen's Compensation [H.L.]	<i>Lord Belper.</i>	Read 3 ^a and passed 29th May (53)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Acquisition of Land	<i>Mr. Atherley Jones</i>	Read 1 ^o 29th May (100)
*Agricultural Rates Act, 1896, etc., Continuance	<i>Mr. Walter Long</i>	Read 3 ^o passed 31st May (357)
Catholic Disabilities Removal	<i>Mr. MacVeagh</i>	Bill withdrawn 2nd June (613)
*Churches (Scotland)	<i>The Lord Advocate.</i>	Read 1 ^o 7th June (972)
*Consolidated Fund (No. 2)	<i>Mr. Austen Chamberlain</i>	Read 1 ^o 6th June (920) Read 2 ^o 23rd July (1439)
Contempt of Court (Ireland)	<i>Mr. McHugh</i>	Bill withdrawn 2nd June (613)
Crofters Holding (Scotland) Act 1886 Amendment (No. 2)	<i>Mr. Lamont</i>	Read 1 ^o 29th May (100)
*Finance	<i>Mr. Austen Chamberlain</i>	Committee 29th May (100) (159) Committee 30th May (244) (292) Read 3 ^o passed 5th June (729) Read 2 ^o 31st May (358)
*Government Ships	<i>Mr. Pretyma</i>	Read 1 ^o 21st June (1225)
*Judicature and Development Grant (Ireland)	<i>Mr. Walter Long</i>	Read 1 ^o 21st June (1225)
Local Government (Ireland) Act Amendment	<i>Mr. Mooney</i>	Bill withdrawn 2nd June (613)
*Naval Lands (Volunteers)	<i>Mr. Pretyma</i>	Read 2 ^o 31st May (361) Committee 23rd June (1484)
Plural Voting	<i>Mr. Soames</i>	2nd Reading (defeated) 2nd June (573)
Poor Law (Scotland)	<i>The Lord Advocate</i>	Read 1 ^o 7th June (900)
Port Sanitary Authority (Expenses)	<i>Sir Walter Plummer</i>	Read 1 ^o 6th June (869)
*Revenue	<i>Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer</i>	Read 1 ^o 21st June (1225)
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*Unemployed Workmen	<i>Mr. Gerald Balfour</i>	Read 2 ^o 20th June (1114)(1174)
Women's Enfranchisement	<i>Mr. Slack</i>	Second Reading adjourned 2nd June (613)
*Workmen's Compensation [H.L.]	<i>Mr. Akers-Douglas</i>	Read 1 ^o 3rd May (243) Second Reading (adjourned) 5th June (799)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1905.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

In Continuation of List given in preceding Volume.

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Railways (Certificates) (Ewell and Long Grove Railway),—Copy of Draft Certificate of the Board of trade authorising the construction of a Railway from Ewell to Long Grove [27 and 28 Vic., c. 120, s. 14]	29 May	6 weeks
Prisons (Scotland),—Copy of Rule made by the Secretary for Scotland appointing Police Cells at Inverary, in the county of Argyle, to be a legal prison for the detention of prisoners for a period not exceeding three days before or during or after trial [40 and 41 Vic., c. 53, s. 58]	6 June	40 days
Intermediate Education (Ireland),—Copy of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland appointing the places at which the Examinations for 1905 shall be held [41 and 42 Vic. c. 66, s. 6]	20 June	40 days
Intermediate Education (Ireland), Copy of Rule made by the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland determining the maximum number of Centre Superintendents to be appointed for the examinations, 1905 [41 and 42 Vic. c 66, s. 6.]	20 June	40 days
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1881

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TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Amendt. = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *As.* = Answers.
Com. = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. *Rep.* = Report.

Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.

Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

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Public Accounts Committee, Butler Report furnished to, *May 31, 349.*

Russia—Anti-Russian Leaflets and Cards sold in London, alleged, *June 1, 454.*

Scottish Churches Dispute Bill, Date of Introducing, *May 31, 333.*

Shop Hours Act (1904)—Closing Orders Submitted by Local Authorities, *June 6, 851.*

Speaker, Date of Moving Vote of Thanks to, *June 1, 453.*

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Threatening Letters—Number brought to Notice of Police in England, *June 6, 860.*

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Douglas, Rt. Hon A. A.—cont.

Whitsuntide Recess, Arrangements as to,
June 1, 454.

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to Widows—Making monthly instead
of lump sum, proposed, *June 5, 703.*

Workmen's Compensation Bill, 2R. *June 5,*
799–804, 808.

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Douglas, Mr. C. M. [Lanark, N. W.]

Coal Export Duty, Exemption from, of
nuts made from dross, proposed,
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Local Boards in Scotland, Lack of Co-operation
between, *June 22, 1414, 1415.*

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ing with—Consultations between Local
Administrators and Local Govern-
ment Board, proposed, *June 22, 1414,*
1415.

Draperstown

Postal Service, Improvement in, proposed.
Q. Mr. John Gordon; A. Lord Stan-
ley, June 5, 674.

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Road Construction, Proposals as to.
Qs. Mr. Boland; As. Mr. Long, June
6, 862, 863.

Drogheda

Plague Inspection Regulations—Payment
of Amount Claimed by Dr. O'Keefe,
etc.

Q. Mr. Nolan; A. Mr. Long,
June 20, 1095.

Droylesden

Magistrate, Appointment of, proposed.

Qs. Mr. Cawley; As. Sir W. Walrond,
June 1, 438, 439.

Dublin

Education Office, Promotion of Clerks in.

Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Mr. Long, June
23, 1437.

Hibernian Academy, Royal, etc., Decision
as to Committee of Inquiry into.

Q. Mr. Mooney; A. Mr. V.
Cavendish, June 5, 721.

Metropolitan Police—Statistical Tables for
1904, Presented, *June 5, 623, 672.*

Natural History Museum—System as to
Promotions of Staff.

Q. Mr. Boland; A. Mr. Long.
June 7, 939, 940.

Post and Telegraph Office.

Disloyal Articles alleged to have been
Written by Officers in Service
Organ.

Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Lord
Stanley, June 7, 932.

Dublin—cont.

Post and Telegraph Office—cont.

Telegrams, Reason for Alleged Delay in.

Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Lord Stan-
ley, June 7, 933.

Trinity College Estates, Committee Report
on.

Adoption of Recommendations, Pro-
posals as to Legislation, etc.

Q. Mr. Lonsdale; A. Mr.
Long, June 20, 1095.

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Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. Atkinson,
May 29, 187.

Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. Long,
June 1, 452.

Dublin Corporation (Superannuation) Bill

l. 3R. May, 29, 2.*

Dublin United Tramways Bill

c. Con. May 31, 313.*

3R. June 5, 668.*

l. 1R. June 6, 819.*

Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway Bill

l. 1R. May 29, 2.*

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Duke, Mr. H. E. [Plymouth]

Navy—Dockyards Staff, established and
hired, Information as to, *June 1, 420.*

Plural Voting Bill, 2R., *June 2, 585–587.*

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l. 3R. May 29, 3.*

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Lunatic Asylum—Reason for Dismissal of
Attendant McKeough.

Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Mr. Long,
June 5, 690.

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Prison—Regulation as to cutting Prisoners
Hair, Case of Mr. J. Fox, etc.

Q. Mr. P. Pease; A. Mr. A.
Douglas, June 20, 1088.

Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H. [Kent Dartford]

School Teachers' Houses, Liability of Local
Authorities for Rent of, *June 22, 1355.*

South Eastern and London, Chatham'
and Dover Railways Bill, 2R. *May 29,*
155–156.

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J. W. Lowther, *June 8, 1069–1073.*

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Lead Poisoning—Return (1899–1904),
Ordered, *June 1, 419–420; Presented,*
June 20, 1033.

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East Ham

Education Act, Refusal to Administer—Resolution rescinded by Town Council, Government Proposals as to Legislation etc.

Qs. Mr. McKenna, Mr. E. Gray, Mr. J. H. Lewis, Mr. L. Sinclair; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 5*, 722, 723.

East India

See India.

Education

Expenditure on, Wasteful Character of.

Os. Sir C. Renshaw, *June 5*, 742; Mr. M. Ferguson, 750.

Education Act, 1902.

Order amending Final Order, No. 1130, Presented, *June 21*, 1207.

Education, Board of

President—Marquess of Londonderry.

Secretary—Sir W. R. Anson.

Education Board Provisional Orders Confirmation (Liverpool, &c.) Bill

c. 2R.* *June 23*, 1433.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 1) Bill

l. Report from the Select Committee* *June 5*, 621.

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Rep. June 8*, 1055.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London No. 2) Bill

c. 1R.* *May 29*, 59.

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Education (England and Wales)

Carnarvonshire Schools, Cost of Improvement of.

Qs. Mr. Lloyd-George; *As.* Mr. W. Anson, *May 29*, 83.

Code of Regulations (1905), Presented, *June 21*, 1206.

Denbighshire Schools, Inspection and Repair of.

Qs. Mr. H. Roberts, Mr. Lloyd-George; *As.* Sir W. Anson, *May 29*, 83-85.

Llandeewyn School, Date of holding Inquiry as to.

Q. Mr. O. Williams; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *June 6*, 861, 862.

Medical Inspection of Children, Necessity for.

O. Sir J. Gorst, *June 1*, 535, 536.

Preston Elementary School—Alleged Caning of Children for non-payment of Fees.

Qs. Sir J. Gorst; *As.* W. Anson *June 7*, 931, 932; *June 22* 1328, 1329.

Education (England and Wales)—cont.**Schools.**

Provision of—Number of Notices given in County of London.

Q. Dr. Macnamara; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *June 2*, 570.

Voluntary and Non-provided—Abolition of Fees, Effect of, on rates etc.

Os. Lord Kinnaird, *May 30*, 192; Lord Burghclere, 195; Lord Chelmsford, 199; Lord Tweedmouth 201; Marquess of Londonderry 203; Lord Stanley of Alderley, 205, 210; Bishop of St. Davids, 209.

Secondary and Technical—Regulations Presented, as to Evening Schools, etc. (1905-1906), *June 20*, 1084.

Teachers.

Houses of, Liability of Local Authorities for rent of.

Q. Sir W. Hart Dyke; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *June 22*, 1355.

Training of, and Examination of Training College Students—Regulations Presented, *June 20*, 1082.

Underfed Children, *see* under Children.

Westbourne Park Schools, Fees at—Class of Children taught in, etc.

Os. Lord Burghclere, *May 30*, 198; Lord Stanley of Alderley, 207.

Education (Ireland)

Allen's Hill School Accommodation, payment of Grant, etc.

Qs. Mr. Sloan; *As.* Mr. Long, *June 22*, 1331-1333.

Banogue Schoolhouse Accommodation.

Q. Mr. Delany; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *June 5*, 715.

Bellaghy Schools, Decision as to Amalgamation of.

Q. Mr. Dillon; *A.* Mr. Long, *May 29*, 93.

Dale, Mr., Report of, Comments on—Tabling, proposed.

Q. Mr. Dillon; *A.* Mr. Long, *May 31*, 336, 337.

Faha—Retiring Allowance of Miss O'Leary

Q. Mr. Murphy; *A.* Mr. Long, *June 7*, 956, 957.

Glasnevin College, Cost of erecting, etc.

Q. Mr. Boland; *A.* Mr. W. Long, *May 29*, 70.

Inspectors—Duties, etc., of Mr. S. E. Stronge.

Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Long, *May 30*, 228.

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Intermediate.

Accounts of Board and Report thereon (1904), Presented, *May 30*, 221; *June 2*, 545.

Examinations, Rules as to, Presented, *June 20*, 1084.

Report (1904), Presented, *May 29*, 5, 60; *June 21*, 1206.

Irish Language, Names of Inspectors of.
Q. Mr. T. O'Donnell; A. Mr. Long, *June 23*, 1437, 1438.

Kildarragh Schoolmaster, Salary of.
Q. Mr. H. Law; A. Mr. Long, *June 2*, 571, 572.

Kilmeedy School Accommodation, Payment of Building Grants, etc.
Qs. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; As. Mr. Long, *May 30*, 240.

Manual Instructresses, Salaries of.
Q. Mr. Dillon; A. Mr. Long, *June 5*, 687, 688.

Mohorough National School Teacher, Salary of.
Q. Mr. K. O'Brien; A. Mr. Long, *May 29*, 70.

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Irish Protestant National Teachers, Appeal from, as to Present Managerial System.
Q. Mr. Sloan; A. Mr. Long, *May 30*, 227.

Pensions, Information as to.
Q. Mr. T. O'Donnell; A. Mr. V. Cavendish, *June 5*, 692.

Salaries of Substitutes for Principal Teachers, etc.
Q. Mr. McHugh; A. Mr. Long, *May 30*, 229.

Sligo—Refusal of Teachers to Honour Toast of King's Health, alleged.
Os. Lord Oranmore and Browne, *June 5*, 624–626; Marquess of Londonderry, 626–628.

Office in Dublin, Promotion of Clerks in—Reason for Delay, etc.

Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Mr. V. Cavendish, *June 2*, 568.

Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Mr. Long, *June 23*, 1437.

Rule 127 (b)—Minutes of Proceedings of Commissioners of National Education, Presented, *May 31*, 315.

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Amalgamation of Boys' and Girls' Schools, Conditions of Enforcing.
Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; A. Mr. Long, *June 2*, 572.

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Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; A. Mr. Long, *June 1*, 450.

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Mixed—Regulations as to Female Teachers in Small Schools Under a Master.

Q. Mr. Boland; A. Mr. Atkinson, *June 5*, 711.

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Q. Mr. Boland; A. Mr. Atkinson, *June 5*, 711, 712.

Education (Scotland)

Highlands and Islands—Income of Trust for Education.

Q. Mr. Weir; A. Mr. S. Dickson, *June 5*, 676.

Report, Annual, by Accountant, Presented, *June 20*, 1082.

Supplementary Courses, Alteration in Method of selecting Pupils for, Alleged.
Q. Mr. Caldwell; A. Mr. S. Dickson, *June 7*, 952.

Teachers, Training of—Minute.

Denominational Character of Colleges, Reasons for Retention of.

Os. Mr. McCrae, *June 22*, 1425, 1426; Mr. Bryce, 1428; Mr. Haldane, 1428, 1429; Mr. P. Smith, 1429; Mr. S. Dickson, 1429, 1430.

Edinburgh School Board Representation on Committee.

Os. Mr. McCrae, *June 22*, 1425–1427; Sir A. Agnew, 1427, 1428; Mr. S. Dickson, 1430.

Transfer of Property to the Committee, Powers of Education Department as to.

Os. Mr. McCrae, *June 22*, 1425, 1426, 1431; Mr. Caldwell, 1431.

Technical Education in Highlands and Islands, Encouragement of.

Q. Mr. J. Dewar, *June 22*, 1369.

Vote for, *June 22*, 1425.

Education (Scotland) Bill

Date of Taking.

Q. Mr. J. Wilson; A. Mr. S. Dickson, *June 1*, 439.

Provincial Councils, Position of.

Os. Mr. McCrae, *June 22*, 1426; Mr. S. Dickson, 1430.

Edwards, Mr. F. [Radnor]

Finance Bill, *Com. May 30*, 273–274.

Sugar Duty of 1901, Abolition of, Proposed, *May 30*, 273, 274.

Egmont, Earl of

Manuscripts of—Report of Historical Manuscripts Commission Presented, *June 20*, 1082.

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Trade Report Presented, *June 8*, 1056.

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Electric Lighting ActsReport under Section 1, Presented, *June 2*, 544, 567.**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill**l. 2R.* *May 30*, 190.Com.* *June 2*, 543.3R.* *June 5*, 622.**Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 2) Bill.**l. 2R.* *May 30*, 190.Com.* *June 2*, 543.3R.* *June 5*, 622.**Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill**l. 2R.* *May 30*, 190.Com.* *June 2*, 543.3R.* *June 5*, 622.**Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill**l. 2R.* *May 30*, 190.**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill**c. 3R.* *May 29*, 57.l. 1R.* *May 30*, 190.2R.* *June 8*, 1055.**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill**l. Com.* *June 8*, 1055.**Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill**l. 2R.* *May 29*, 3.**Ellice, Capt. E. C. [St. Andrews Burghs]**Motor Horns, Annoyance caused by Sounding, during Hours of Divine Service on Sundays, *June 21*, 1212.**Elliot, Mr. A. R. D. [Durham]**Colonial Conference, 1906—Government Policy, Subjects to be discussed, etc., *June 7*, 994-997.Fiscal Policy of the Government, *June 7*, 994-997.**"Emerald," H.M.S.**

Proposals as to Removal from Cork Harbour, etc.

Qs. Captain Donelan; As. Mr. Pretymann, *June 22*, 1333.**Emigration**

Ireland, from, Increase in.

O. Mr. O'Mara, *June 5*, 761.**Emmott, Mr. A. [Oldham]**Congo Free State Inquiry, Publication of Report of, Presentation of Dr. Baccari's Report, etc., *June 22*, 1353.

India.

Budget Surpluses, Application of, *June 21*, 1318, 1319.Fiscal Question, Attitude towards, *June 21*, 1317, 1318.**Empire Day**

Union Jack, Reasons for not Hoisting, on War Office.

Q. Sir C. Rasch; A. Mr. Arnold-Forster, *June 5*, 700.**Esmonde, Sir T. G. [Wexford, N.]**Poulduff Pier Works, Date of commencing, *June 5*, 687.**Essex**

County Boundary—Transfer of Parishes to Hertfordshire.

Qs. Sir C. Rasch, Col. Lockwood; As. Mr. G. Balfour, *June 5*, 706.

Protest against Removal of Parishes to Hertfordshire.

Q. Lt.-Col. Tufnell; A. Mr. G. Balfour, *June 7*, 927, 928.**Estate Duties**

Income from, for 1905 Revenue Return—and the Financial Statement, Discrepancies in Figures of.

Os. Sir H. Fowler, *May 31*, 328, 329; 331; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 328, 329.

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Q. Mr. L. Jones; A. Mr. A. Chamberlain, *June 20*, 1092, 1093.

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Q. Mr. T. L. Corbett; A. Mr. A. Chamberlain, *May 31*, 328.**Evans, Mr. S. T. [Glamorgan, Mid]**Places of Worship Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *June 23*, 1496.**Evictions**

[For particular places, see their names.]

Number of Notices Filed up to March 31, 1905, Under Section 7 of Land Act, 1887.

Qs. Mr. Flynn; As. Mr. Long, *June 1*, 443, 444.

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Q. Mr. Delany; A. Mr. Atkinson, *June 5*, 715, 716.

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Board of Trade Draft Certificate Authorising, Presented, *May 29, 60; May 30, 191.*

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O. Mr. McCrae, June 23, 1464.

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Q. Capt. Norton; A. Mr. A. Chamberlain, May 30, 224.

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Qs. Sir H. Fowler, May 31, 328, 329, 331; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 328, 329.

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Canadian Dairy Produce, etc., Imported into United Kingdom (1904 and 1905).

Qs. Mr. Bright; As. Mr. B. Law, June 7, 951, 952; June 20, 1087, 1088.

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Switzerland, Order in Council as to Convention with, Presented, *June 2, 545, 568; June 20, 1081.*

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1. Rep. May 30, 192.*

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Factories and Workshops

Fire, Precautions against—Date of Appointment of Committee of Inquiry.

Q. Mr. Tennant; A. Sir A. Acland-Hood, May 31, 319.

Lead Poisoning, *see that title.*

Report of Chief Inspector (1904) Presented, *June 20, 1082.*

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National School—Retiring Allowance of Miss O'Leary.

Q. Mr. Murphy; A. Mr. Long, June 7, 956, 957.

Failsworth

Magistrate, Appointment of, proposed.

Qs. Mr. Cawley; As. Sir W. Walrond, June 1, 438, 439.

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Harbour Improvements, Date of Commencing.

Q. Mr. H. Law; A. Mr. Long, May 29, 72.

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Report, Annual, Presented, *June 20, 1083.*

Farrell, Mr. J. P. [Longford, N.]

Granard Estate Turbary Rights—Case of T. Whitney, *May 30, 225–226.*

Greenfield Races, Duties of Constabulary Force at, *May 30, 225.*

Maconchy Estate, Sale of—Inspection of Holding of M. Whitney, *May 30, 223.*

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Fellowes, Rt. Hon. A. E.—President of the Board of Agriculture (Hunts, Ramsey).

Agricultural Holdings Acts, proposals as to Consolidation of, *June 2, 568.*

Fisheries—Lancashire and Western Sea Fisheries Committee, Diminution of Yield of Fish under Operations of, alleged, *June 1, 421.*

Glanders Outbreak at Fulham—Regulations as to Veterinary Inspection and Application of Mallein Test, *May 31, 333.*

Fenwick, Mr. C.—[Northumberland, Wansbeck]**Coal Export Duty.**

Amount received in each Shipping Port (1902–1905), *June 5, 680.*

Exemption of Nuts made from Dross, proposed, *May 30, 297, 298.*

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Ferguson, Mr. R. C. Munro [Leith Burghs]

Allotments—Failure of Local Government Board to carry out Parish Councils Act, 1894, *June 22, 1406.*

Army Expenditure, Necessity for Reduction of, *June 5, 751.*

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Exemption of Coal Nuts made from Dross, proposed, *May 30, 302.*

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Congested Districts Board, Constitution and Work of—Amalgamation with Crofter Commission, proposed, *June 22, 1374.*

Crofters and Cotters, Land Purchased for by Congested Districts Board—Establishment of System of Peasant Proprietorship, etc., *June 22, 1374.*

Education, Wasteful Character of Expenditure on, *June 5, 750.*

Finance Bill, *Com., May 30, 302; 3R. June 5, 749–751.*

Income Tax, Graduation of—Systems in Foreign Countries, Date of publication of Blue Book, *June 5, 751.*

Local Government Board, Constitution and Work of, Allegations as to, *June 22, 1407, 1408.*

May 29—June 23.

Ferguson, Mr. R. C. Munro—cont.

Merchant Shipping—Discontinuance of Boy Sailor Scheme—Action of Board of Trade, *June 6, 906.*

Pollution of Air and Water, Failure of Local Government Board to deal with, alleged, *June 22, 1407.*

Public Accounts, Audit of, proposed increase in Stringency of, *June 5, 750.*

Trawling by Foreign Trawlers in Moray Firth, *June 22, 1374, 1386.*

Unemployed, Method of Dealing with—Consultations between Local Administrations and Local Government Board, proposed, *June 22, 1422.*

Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. [Manchester, N.E.]

Africa, South—Trading Rights of British Indians, *June 21, 1312.*

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Recruits, Difficulty in Obtaining, *June 23, 1443.*

Soldiers, Civil Employment of, on Discharge, *June 23, 1443.*

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill 2r. *June 23, 1442.*

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Natives, Exclusion of, Grievances as to, *June 21, 1312, 1313.*

Parliamentary Inquiries into, Revival of System of, proposed, *June 21, 1312.*

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Works of a Permanent Character, borrowings for, *June 21, 1311.*

Railways, Progress made with Construction of, etc., *June 21, 1313.*

North-Eastern Railway Bill, *Con., June 1, 516-517.*

South African War Stores and Supplies, Wastage of, Government proposals as to Inquiry, etc., *June 23, 1442.*

Ffrench, Mr. P. [Wexford, S.]

Boyce Estate—Mrs. White's Application for Reinstatement, *May 29, 93.*

Field, Mr. W. [Dublin, St. Patrick]

Beet Culture and utilisation of Peat Bogs, Reports as to, *June 7, 938.*

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Gambling in Futures—International Congress in Rome, Instructions to Delegates at, as to Discussion of Question, *June 20, 1086.*

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Gambling in Stocks and Shares, Proposed Legislation to Prevent, *May 30, 224.*

India—Deaths from Plague and Measures taken to cope with, *June 7, 936.*

Magistrates, Resident, in Ireland, Qualifications Required for, *June 7, 939.*

Meat, Examination of, by Purchasers—Circular Issued as to provision of Forks by Traders, *June 7, 927.*

Railway Rates and Transit Facilities—Powers of Agriculture and Technical Instruction Department, etc., *June 7, 938.*

Tobacco, Stripped, Reduction of Duty on, proposed, *May 30, 259.*

Wheat, Gambling in—Effect on Imports to United Kingdom, etc., *June 5, 675.*

Finance Bill

(For Subjects Discussed, see titles Coal, Tobacco, Sugar, etc.)

c. *Com. May 29, 100-154; 159-188; May 30, 244-312.*

Rep.* *May 30, 312.*

3r. *June 5, 729-780.*

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Amendment to, Outside of Scope of the Bill, Ruled out of Order.

Os. Mr. Deputy-Chairman, Mr. McKenna, *May 30, 311.*

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Os. Mr. Dalziel; Mr. A. Chamberlain, *May 29, 184.*

Findlay, Mr. A. [Lanark, N.E.]

Coal Export Duty, Exemption from, of Nuts made from Dross, proposed, *May 30, 302.*

Finance Bill, *Com., May 30, 302-303.*

Poor Law in Scotland—Administrative System, Working of, *June 22, 1411.*

Finlay, Sir R. B.—Attorney-General [Inverness Burghs]

Divorce Cases dealt with in London Courts during 1904, *June 6, 861.*

Liverpool Court of Passage—Sanctioning Powers of Ordering Summary Judgment, proposed, *June 23, 1437.*

Motor-Cars—Ministers Fined for Reckless Driving, alleged, *June 5, 816.*

South African War Stores, etc., Butler Report on, Government Proposals as to Inquiry, Powers of Royal Commissions, etc., *June 21, 1224; June 22, 1342, 1343.*

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Parliamentary Election—New Writ Issued for East Division, *June 21, 1207.*

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McKenna, Mary Jane, Circumstances of Death of.

Q. Mr. MacVeagh; A. Mr. Long, June 22, 1360, 1361.

Fire

Escape from—Provision in Buildings in the Occupation of more than one Occupier, etc.—Select Committee.

Appointment of, June 20, 1203.

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Q. Mr. Tennant; A. Sir A. Acland-Hood, May '31, 319.

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Q. Mr. J. Burns; A. Mr. A. Douglas, June 22, 1329.

First Commissioner of Works

Lord Windsor.

First Lord of the Admiralty

Earl of Cawdor.

First Lord of the Treasury

Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour.

Fiscal Policy

Food, Taxation of, Government Attitude towards.

Os. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, June 7, 984; Lord H. Cecil, 1005-1007; Mr. Lyttelton, 1013; Mr. Asquith, 1014; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 1017, 1018; Mr. G. Bowles, 1023, 1024.

Q. Mr. Black; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 7, 960.

Government Policy.

Os. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, June 7, 980-985; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 984-990; Sir C. Dilke, 990-994; Mr. Elliot, 994-997; Mr. Robson, 997, 998; Sir F. Milner, 998-1000; Mr. Churchill, 1000-1003; Lord H. Cecil, 1003-1009; Mr. J. Chamberlain, 1015-1021; Mr. Ritchie, 1021-1023; Mr. G. Bowles, 1023-1025.

Speeches of the Prime Minister, Publication of, proposed.

Qs. Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Pirie; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 5, 721, 722.

India, Position of, and Attitude towards the Proposals.

Os. Sir H. Fowler, June 21, 1254, 1255; Lord G. Hamilton, 1257; Sir M. Bownaggee, 1296, 1297; Sir C. Dilke, 1310; Mr. Brodrick, 1314; Mr. Emmott, 1317, 1318; Mr. Wylie, 1319, 1320.

Retaliation, Government Attitude towards. O. Lord Avebury, June 5, 663.

Tariff Reform, Definition of.

Os. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, June 7, 983; Mr. Ritchie, 1021, 1022.

Fisheries, Board of

President—Rt. Hon. A. E. Fellowes.

Fisheries

International Territorial Limit, Decision as to Extension of.

Q. Mr. Maconochie; A. Mr. Scott Dickson, May 29, 85.

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Q. Col. McCalmont; A. Mr. Long, June 20, 1096.

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Q. Mr. C. Wason; A. Mr. S. Dickson, *June 7*, 927.

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l. 3R. May 29*, 2.

c. Lords' Amendts., Con. June 2*, 566.

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l. Rep. from Select Committee, June 5*, 621.

Hutchison, Dr. C. F. [Sussex, Rye]

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Hutton, Mr. John [Yorkshire, Richmond]

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Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; A. Mr. A. Douglas, *June 7*, 950.

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Qs. Mr. Hardy; As. Mr. B. Davenport, *June 1*, 430, 431.

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Q. Mr. Boland; A. Mr. Long, *May 29*, 69.

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Q. Mr. J. H. Lewis; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 21*, 1207.

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Os. Mr. Dalziel, *June 5*, 756; Mr. Bright, 759.

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O. Mr. M. Ferguson, *June 5*, 751.

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Os. Sir C. Renshaw, *June 5*, 742; Mr. Lough, 743; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 755; Mr. K. Hardie, 770, 771.

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Q. Mr. Schwann; A. Mr. A. Chamberlain, *June 7*, 948.

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Secretary, Salary of, Placing on British Estimates, proposed.*Os.* Mr. H. Roberts, *June 21*, 1285, 1286; Sir M. Bohnnaggee, 1289, Mr. Brodrick, 1315.**India**Accounts, *see under subheading* Finance.
Administration.

Curzon, Lord, Policy of.

Os. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 21*, 1262; Mr. Haldane, 1262-1267; Mr. C. Wason, 1267; Mr. H. Roberts, 1283.

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Os. Mr. C. Wason, *June 21*, 1268; Mr. S. Smith 1271-1273; Major E. Gordon, 1278, 1279; Mr. H. Roberts, 1283 1284, 1286; Sir J. Fergusson, 1312, 1313.

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Os. Mr. S. Smith, *June 21*, 1276, 1277; Mr. H. Roberts, 1284; Sir M. Bohnnaggee, 1288-1291; Sir J. Fergusson, 1312; Mr. Brodrick, 1313, 1314.Afghanistan, *see that title*.

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Demonstration Farms, Experiments with.

O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1244.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1244.

Alipore Joint Magistrate, Sentence inflicted by, on Husain Raza.

Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 1*, 427.

Allahabad—Sentence passed on Chaukidar Mahabir for Theft of Letters.

Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 22*, 1330.**Army.**Administration—Correspondence Presented, *June 20*, 1085.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1238, 1239; Sir H. Fowler, 1252.Commander-in-Chief, Office of (*see also subheading* Kitchener, Lord).

Abolition of, proposed.

Os. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 21*, 1261; Sir J. Fergusson, 1311.

Re-organisation of Duties and Functions of, proposed.

Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1242, 1243; Sir H. Fowler, 1252, 1253; Lord G. Hamilton, 1260, 1261; Sir C. Dilke, 1306, 1307.**India—cont.****Army—cont.**

Field Army, Proposals as to Increasing Strength of.

O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1239.

Frontier Defence, Protection of British Officers engaged in—Murder of Col. Harman, and Capt. Bowring.

Q. Sir E. Grey; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 29*, 68.

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O. Sir C. Dilke, *June 21*, 1309.*Qs.* Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. Arnold Forster, *June 7*, 925; *June 22*, 1348, 1349.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1240-1242.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1242, 1253; Sir H. Fowler, 1253.

Military Supply Department, Proposed Formation of—Duties and Functions of, etc.

Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1242-1244; Sir H. Fowler, 1252, 1253; Lord G. Hamilton, 1260, 1261; Sir C. Dilke, 1306, 1307.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1239.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1239.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1232.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1239; Lord G. Hamilton, 1260; Sir C. Dilke, 1307, 1308.*Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 7*, 937.

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Q. Mr. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 6*, 855.

Rifle Factories, etc.; Establishment of.

O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1239.

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Os. Sir H. Fowler, *June 21*, 1253, 1254; Sir J. Fergusson, 1311; Sir C. Dilke, 1311, 1316; Mr. Brodrick, 1316.

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Os. Mr. Haldane, *June 21*, 1266.*Q.* Mr. H. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 5*, 701.

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Date of taking—Advantages of earlier Introduction.

Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1229; Mr. Haldane, 1263, 1267; Mr. H. Roberts, 1283; Sir M. Bhownaggee, 1288, 1289.

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Os. Sir H. Fowler, *June 21*, 1251; Mr. S. Smith, 1270; Mr. Emmott, 1318, 1319.

Commerce, Statistics as to.

Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1234, 1235; Sir H. Fowler, 1254.

Commerce and Industry, Establishment of Department of.

Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1247; Sir M. Bhownaggee, 1292.Condition and Progress, Material and Moral—Statement for 1903–1904, Presented, *May 30*, 221; *June 2*, 545.

Cotton Cultivation in, Experiments with, Acreage under Cultivation, etc.

O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1245.

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Q. Mr. Buchanan; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 7*, 937, 938.Indian Representative on, proposed, *O.* Mr. S. Smith, *June 21*, 1273.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1240, 1241.

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Os. Sir H. Fowler, *June 21*, 1250.

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Goorkhas, Question of Compensation to.

O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1233.

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Q. Sir H. Meysey-Thompson; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 30*, 231.*Q.* Sir S. King; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 1*, 427, 428.

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Q. Sir S. King; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 6*, 855.

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Q. Mr. Schwann; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 7*, 947.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1237; Sir M. Bhownaggee, 1292.

Technical and Industrial, Extension of, proposed.

Os. Mr. S. Smith, *June 21*, 1276.

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O. Mr. Haldane, *June 21*, 1265, 1266.

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Os. Mr. H. Roberts, *June 21*, 1287, 1288.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1237; Sir M. Bhownaggee, 1292.

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O. Sir H. Fowler, *June 21*, 1249.Resolution (Mr. Brodrick), *June 21*, 1321.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1234.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1230; Sir H. Fowler, 1248.Loans, *see that subheading*.Statement by Secretary of State, *June 21*, 1229–1248.

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Os. Mr. MacVeagh, Sir A. Acland-Hood, *June 2*, 573.

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Os. Sir H. Fowler, *June 21*, 1254, 1255; Lord G. Hamilton, 1257; Sir M. Bhownaggee, 1296, 1297; Sir C. Dilke, 1310; Mr. Brodrick, 1314; Mr. Emmott, 1317, 1318; Mr. Wylie, 1319, 1320.

Hyderabad (Deccan) Company, Royalty payable by.

Q. Sir M. Bhownaggee; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1211, 1212.Income and Expenditure—Return Presented, *May 29*, 60.

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Industrial Development of—Introduction of Foreign Capital and Labour, proposed.

Os. Mr. S. Smith, *June 21*, 1275.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1245 ; Lord G. Hamilton, 1257 ; Mr. Wylie, 1320.

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Os. Sir M. Bhownaggee, *June 21*, 1292, 1293.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1233.

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Return of Loans raised in India, Presented, *June 23*, 1434.

Local Governments and District Local Boards, Grants to, for Development Purposes.

O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1237.

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Q. Mr. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 20*, 1094. ✓

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Os. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 21*, 1258, 1259 ; Major E. Gordon, 1281, 1282.

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Q. Mr. Weir ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 22*, 1331.

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Os. Sir M. Bhownaggee, *June 21*, 1293–1295. ✓

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1232.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1231, 1232.

Q. Mr. Field ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 7*, 936.

Police Pay and Inspection, Improvements in.

O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1237.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1235, 1236.

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Os. Sir M. Bhownaggee, *June 21*, 1295.

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Os. Sir M. Bhownaggee, *June 21*, 1295, 1296.

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Q. Sir R. Ropner ; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 5*, 694.

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Board, Establishment of, Constitution, etc.

Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1246 ; Sir M. Bhownaggee, 1292.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1235 ; Lord G. Hamilton, 1257, 1258 ; Sir J. Ferguson, 1313.

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Q. M. Buchanan ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 5*, 701, 702.

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Os. M. Caldwell, *June 23*, 1476, 1478, 1480 ; Mr. Brodrick, 1477, 1479, 1482 ; Mr. Buchanan, 1478 ; Mr. Bowles, 1479, 1480 ; Mr. Black, 1483.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1235, 1246 ; Sir H. Fowler, 1249, 1250.

Rawalpindi, Alleged Murder of Sergeant by Native at—Official Information as to Conduct of Troops.

Q. Sir M. Bhownaggee ; *A.* Mr. Brodrick, *May 29*, 69.

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O. Mr. S. Smith, *June 21*, 1271.

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Os. Mr. S. Smith, *June 21*, 1274 ; Major E. Gordon, 1279.

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Os. Mr. C. Wason, *June 21*, ✓1269, 1270 ; Major E. Gordon, 1278.

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Qs. Mr. Weir ; *As.* Mr. Brodrick, *June 20*, 1093, 1094.

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Tax, Further Reduction of, Proposals as to.

Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1236; Sir H. Fowler, 1249, 1251; Lord G. Hamilton, 1258; Sir M. Bohnaggre, 1291.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1236.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1245.

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Os. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1234, 1235; Sir H. Fowler, 1254.

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O. Mr. Brodrick, *June 21*, 1244.

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Ceylon and New Zealand, Accession of, to Additional Act—Paper Presented, *June 23*, 1434.

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Q. Mr. Slack; *A.* Mr. A. Douglas, *June 7*, 930.

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Q. Mr. MacVeagh; *A.* Mr. Long, *June 22*, 1359, 1360.

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Industrial Classes, Companies Dealing with—Terms of Reference of Committee of Inquiry.

Q. Col. Legge; *A.* Mr. B. Law, *June 5*, 707.

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l. 2R. *May 29*, 5-32.

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Lord-Lieutenant—Earl of Dudley.

Chief Secretary—Rt. Hon. W. H. Long.

Lord Chancellor—Lord Ashbourne.

Attorney-General—Rt. Hon. J. Atkinson.

For particular places see their names.

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Qs. Mr. MacVeagh; *As.* Mr. Long, *June 22*, 1357.

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Os. Mr. J. O'Connor, *May 31*, 377; Mr. H. Law, 383; Col. Saunderson, 385; Mr. H. Burke, 391; Mr. O'Malley, 394; Mr. Asquith, 398, 404; Mr. Long, 403, 412; Mr. J. Redmond, 406; Mr. Dillon, 406, 411, 413.

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Os. Marquess of Londonderry, *June 5*, 666.

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Os. Lord Castletown, *June 5*, 664; Marquess of Londonderry, 665.

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Os. Lord Castletown, *June 5*, 664; Marquess of Londonderry, 666.

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Os. Lord Castletown, *June 5*, 664; Marquess of Londonderry, 665.

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Q. Mr. MacVeagh; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 5*, 727.

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Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. Long, *June 7*, 938.

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Q. Mr. J. Redmond; *A.* Mr. Atkinson, *June 5*, 718.

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Q. Mr. Delany; *A.* Mr. Long, *June 6*, 862.

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Q. Mr. McHugh; A. Mr. Jas. Campbell, *May 30*, 235.

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Qs. Mr. McHugh, Mr. Flynn; As. Mr. Atkinson, *June 1*, 439, 440.

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Qs. Mr. Delany, Mr. Reddy; As. Mr. Long, *May 30*, 238-239.

Qs. Mr. Roche, Mr. Gordon, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. MacVeagh; As. Mr. Long, Mr. Deputy Speaker, *May 30*, 241-243.

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Os. Mr. Delany, *June 7*, 1030; Mr. Long, 1031.

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Qs. Mr. Flynn, Mr. J. Redmond; As. Mr. Atkinson, Mr. Deputy Speaker, *June 5*, 713, 714.

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Qs. Mr. Jno. O'Connor; As. Mr. Atkinson, *June 5*, 719, 720.

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Q. Mr. Jno. O'Connor; A. Mr. Long, *May 30*, 229.

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O. Mr. Marks, *June 5*, 768.

Embezzlement, Number of Prosecutions for, in 1904.

Q. Mr. Delany; A. Mr. Long, *June 7*, 953.

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O. Mr. O'Mara, *June 5*, 761.

Qs. Mr. MacVeagh, Mr. J. Redmond; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 5*, 726, 727.

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Q. Mr. Reddy; A. Mr. Long, *June 6*, 864.

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Qs. Mr. MacNeill, Mr. MacVeagh; As. Mr. Atkinson, *June 5*, 718, 719.

Q. Mr. MacVeagh; A. Mr. Long, *June 7*, 956.

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Q. Mr. Dillon; A. Mr. Long, *May 31*, 336.

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Q. Mr. Reddy; A. Mr. Long, *June 6*, 864.

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Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; A. Mr. Long, *May 31*, 335.

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Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; A. Mr. Long, *June 6*, 864.

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Q. Mr. MacVeagh; A. Mr. Long, *June 2, 571.*

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Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; A. Mr. Long, *June 1, 444.*Taxation, *see under that title.*

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Q. Mr. MacVeagh; A. Mr. Long, *June 6, 864, 865.*

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Qs. Mr. Flynn; As. Mr. Long, *May 29, 86.*

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Q. Mr. Delany; A. Mr. Long, *June 7, 958, 959.*Trinity College, Dublin, *see under* Dublin.

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Os. Colonel Saunderson, *May 31, 387; Mr. O'Malley 395; Mr. Long, 408.*

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Q. Mr. James O'Kelly; A. Mr. Long, *June 5, 689.***Irish Language**

Schools, in—Names of Inspectors.

Q. Mr. T. O'Donnell; A. Mr. Long, *June 23, 1437, 1438.***Iron Ore**Deposits in Foreign Countries—Report of Board of Trade Presented, *June 6, 825, 849-850.***Italy**Trade Report Presented, *June 8, 1056.***James of Hereford, Lord**Colonial Conference, 1906, Date and Conditions of Summoning, Subjects to be discussed at, etc., *June 5, 646-649.***Jameson, Major J. E. [Clare, W.]**Lights and Lighthouse, Ireland—Breaking of Barrels Lightship Cable, *May 31, 317.***Japan**Trade Report Presented, *June 2, 544.***Jessel, Capt. H. M. [St. Pancras, S.]**Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R. *June 2, 614.***Johnson, Mr. J. [Gateshead]**Coal Export Duty, Reduction of, proposed, *May 29, 107-110.*Finance Bill, *Com.*, *May 29, 100-110.***Joicey, Sir J. [Durham, Chester-le-Street]**Coal Export Duty, Abolition of, proposed, *May 29, 140-142.*Finance Bill, *Com.*, *May 29, 140-142; May 30, 274-275.*Sugar Duty of 1901, Effect of, on Trade, *May 30, 274-275.***Jones, Mr. D. B. [Swansea District]**County Court Judges, Salaries of, Savings effected by Absorption of Circuits, etc., *June 20, 1100.*South African War Stores and Supplies, Wastage of—Butler Committee Report etc., *June 20, 1112, 1113.***Jones, Mr. L. S. [Westmoreland, Appleby]**Licensed Premises, System of valuing for Estate Duty, *June 20, 1092.***Joyce, Mr. M. [Limerick]**Agriculture and Technical Instruction Department, Ireland, Proposed Appointment of Irish Commissioner in England, *May 31, 343.*Shannon River Fisheries, Information as to Claims for Ownership of, *May 29, 95-96.***Judge-Advocate General**

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Qs. Colonel Nolan; As. Mr. Arnold-Forster, *June 5, 698.***Judicature and Development Grant (Ireland) Bill**c.l.r.* *June 21, 1225.***Kearley, Mr. H. E. [Devonport]**Submarine Mining Divisions of Militia and Volunteers, Decision as to, *June 20, 1098.***Kennedy, Mr. Vincent P. [Cavan, W.]**Afghanistan, Ruler of—Correctness of Title as used by Indian Government, *June 1, 432; June 6, 866.*Army—Retiring Allowance of Private T. Dolan of Royal Irish Rifles, *June 6, 865.*Crime and Criminal Offences—Comparison between North and South of Ireland, etc., *June 7, 957.*Divorce Cases dealt with in London Courts during 1904, *June 6, 861.*Doncaster—Case of, *Rex. v. W. Webb*—Legislation to enforce Hearing of Similar Cases *in Camera* proposed, *May 31, 327.*Firearms, Proposals as to continuing Search for—Number of Arms seized, etc., *May 29, 95.*

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Qs. Mr. G. Bowles, Mr. MacNeill; As. Mr. Pretymman, Mr. A. Douglas, *May 31*, 322–324.

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Q. Mr. G. Bowles; A. Mr. Pretymman, *June 5*, 695, 696.

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Os. Mr. Houston, *June 7*, 1041, 1042; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1042, 1043; Sir R. Ropner, 1049.**Navy—cont.**

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Q. Sir A. Agnew; A. Mr. Arnold-Forster, *May 29*, 78.

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Q. Mr. Cogan; A. Mr. Pretymman, *May 29*, 65.

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Q. Mr. C. McArthur; A. Mr. Pretymman, *June 6*, 852.

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Os. Mr. Whitley, *June 5*, 782; Mr. Purvis, 783; Mr. A. Lee, 784; Mr. Dalziel, 786; Mr. Caldwell, 789; Mr. Pretymman, 790.

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Os. Mr. Whitley, *June 5*, 780, 781; Mr. A. Lee, 784.

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Os. Mr. Whitley, *June 5*, 779; Mr. A. Lee, 784.**Navy Estimates**

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Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *June 23*, 1446; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1450; Mr. Buchanan, 1454.Works, Buildings, and Repairs—£1,905,200, *Rep.*, *June 5*, 779, 781.**Necrosis**

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Victualling Store at—Loan from Imperial Government.

Os. Mr. Whitley, *June 5*, 782; Mr. Purvis, 783; Mr. A. Lee, 784; Mr. Dalziel, 786; Mr. Caldwell, 789; Mr. Pretyman, 790.**New Writs***See under Parliamentary Elections.***New Zealand**Industrial Property Convention—Accession to Additional Act, Presented, *June 23*, 1434.**Newcastle-on-Tyne**Polling Districts—Order as to Division of Wards, Presented, *June 20*, 1083.**Newcastle-on-Tyne Corporation Bill***l.* Report from Select Committee, *June 2*, 542.*3R.* June 6*, 818.*c. lR.* June 6*, 849.**Newfoundland**

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Qs. Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Levy, Mr. Samuel, Sir J. Brunner, Mr. Blake, Mr. C. Wason; *As.* Mr. Lyttelton, Mr. Speaker, *June 22*, 1350-1533**Newry, Keady and Tynan Light Railway Bill***c. Con.* and *3R.* June 6*, 846.*l. lR.* June 6*, 819.**Newton, Lord**Afghanistan, Relations of, with India—Policy of H.M. Government—Terms of New Treaty, etc., *June 2*, 546-583, 564.**Newtownbarry**Intermediate Education Examination Centre, Rule as to, Presented, *June 20*, 1084.**Nigeria**

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Os. Archbishop of Canterbury *June 6*, 833; Duke of Marlborough, 837-840, Lord Stanmore, 845.**Nigeria cont.**Drink Traffic—*cont.*

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Os. Archbishop of Canterbury, *June 6*, 834; Duke of Marlborough, 840.

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Os. Archbishop of Canterbury, *June 6*, 826-836, 840, 841, 843; Duke of Marlborough 836-844; Lord Stanmore, 844, 855.

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Os. Archbishop of Canterbury, *June 6*, 831-833; Duke of Marlborough, 841, 842.

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Q. Mr. Coghill; *A.* Mr. Lyttelton, *June 5*, 692, 693.

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Q. Mr. H. Samuel; *A.* Mr. Lyttelton, *June 6*, 856.

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*Q. Mr. L. Sinclair; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 21, 1210.***Parliamentary Procedure**

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Q. Mr. MacNeill; A. Lord Stanley, May, 29, 97.

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Q. Mr. P. Pease; A. Lord Stanley, June 20, 1089.

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Q. Mr. Shackleton; A. Lord Stanley, June 1, 422, 423.

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Qs. Mr. Sloan; A. Lord Stanley, June 23, 1435, 1436.

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Q. Mr. Sloan; A. Lord Stanley, June 23, 1436.

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Q. Mr. T. W. Russell; A. Lord Stanley, June 5, 677.

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Q. Mr. James O'Connor; A. Lord Stanley, June 6, 854; June 23, 1436.

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Q. Mr. John Gordon; A. Lord Stanley, June 5, 674.

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Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Lord Stanley, June 7, 932.

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Qs. Mr. Flynn; As. Lord Stanley, June 1, 452, 453.

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Q. Mr. Sloan; A. Lord Stanley, June 23, 1436.

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Q. Mr. S. Young; A. Lord Stanley, June 5, 673.

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Q. Mr. MacNeill; A. Lord Stanley, June 5, 720, 721.

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Q. Mr. Sloan; A. Lord Stanley, June 7, 933, 934.

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Q. Mr. MacNeill; A. Lord Stanley, June 5, 720.

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Q. Mr. T. L. Corbett; A. Lord Stanley, May 29, 97.

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Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Lord Stanley, June 22, 1361.

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Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Lord Stanley, June 22, 1328.

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Q. Mr. Bill; A. Lord Stanley, *June 7, 951.*

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Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Lord Stanley, *May 29, 63.***Mail Service.**American Mails—Return Presented, *June 1, 418.*

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Qs. Captain Donelan, Mr. Nannetti; As. Lord Stanley, *June 22, 1361, 1362.***Money Orders.**Colonial—Statutory Rules and Orders, 1905, Presented, *June 5, 623, 672.*

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Q. Mr. G. Bowles; A. Lord Stanley, *May 30, 222.*

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Q. Mr. Nannetti; A. Lord Stanley, *May 29, 64.*Q. Mr. J. Gordon; A. Lord Stanley, *May 30, 223.*

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Q. Mr. Marks; A. Lord Stanley, *June 23, 1435.*

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Q. Mr. H. Law; A. Lord Stanley, *June 5, 674.***Wages.**

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Q. Mr. C. Devlin; A. Lord Stanley, *May 29, 90.*

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Q. Mr. MacNeill; A. Lord Stanley, *May 29, 82.***Postmaster-General***Lord Stanley.***Poulduff Pier**

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Q. Sir T. Esmonde; A. Mr. Long, *June 5, 687.***Powell, Sir F. S. [Wigan]**Unemployed Workmen Bill, 2R., *June 20, 1180–1183.***Preston**

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Qs. Sir J. Gorst; As. Sir W. Anson *June 7, 931, 932; June 22, 1328, 1329.***President of the Board of Agriculture***Rt. Hon. A. E. Fellowes.***President of the Board of Education***Marquess of Londonderry.***President of the Board of Trade***Marquess of Salisbury.***President of the Local Government Board***Rt. Hon. G. W. Balfour.***Pretymen, Capt. E. G.—Secretary to the Admiralty [Suffolk, Woodbridge]**Discipline Act of 1866—Regulations as to Enforcement of Section 16, *June 5, 695.***Dockyards.**Portsmouth, Discharges from, *June 6, 853.*Staff, Established and hired, Information as to, *June 1, 420.*“Emerald”—Proposals as to Removal, etc., *June 22, 1333.*Flour, Compressed—Practicability of Lord Masham's Invention, *June 7, 928.*Government Ships Bill, 2R., *May 31, 357–358.*Guns, Erosion of, from use of Cordite—Results of Experiments by Committee, *June 5, 790.*Homing Pigeon Reserve Scheme, Information as to, *May 31, 316.*

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Os. Mr. Weir, *June 22*, 1363, 1367; Mr. J. Dewar, 1367; Mr. S. Dickson, 1383.

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Os. Mr. C. Douglas, *June 22*, 1414, 1415; Mr. K. Hardie, 1415, 1416; Mr. S. Dickson, 1419, 1420; Mr. M. Ferguson, 1422.

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Scott, Sir S. E. [Marylebone, West]

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Scott-Montagu, Mr. J. [Hants, New Forest]

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O. Mr. Buchanan, *May 29*, 99.

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Right Hon. A. Lyttelton.

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

Marquess of Lansdowne.

Secretary of State for the Home Department

Right Hon. A. Akers Douglas.

Secretary of State for India

Right Hon. W. St. John Brodrick.

Secretary (Chief) for Ireland

Right Hon. W. H. Long.

Secretary for Scotland

Marquess of Linlithgow.

Secretary of State for War

Right Hon. H. O. Arnold-Forster.

Seely, Major J. E. B. [Isle of Wight]

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South African War Stores, etc., Butler Report on, Government Proposals as to Investigation, Form and Powers of Commission, etc., *June 21*, 1323; *June 22*, 1344; *June 23*, 1440.

Shackleton, Mr. D. J. [Lancashire, Clitheroe]

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Qs. Mr. Joyce; As. Mr. V. Cavenish, *May 29*, 95-97.

Shaw, Mr. T., [Hawick Burghs]

Crofters and Cottars, Scotland, Policy of Congested Districts Board as to acquisition of land for, Compulsory Powers, etc., *June 22*, 1390, 1392, 1393.

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Shaw-Stewart, Sir H., [Renfrew, East]

Allotments, Scotland—Failure of Local Government Board to carry out Parish Councils Act, 1894, *June 22*, 1410, 1411.

Sheehan, Mr. D. D., [Cork Co., Mid]

Crookstown—Decision as to Tenant of Cottage on Mrs. Wall's Land, *May 31*, 343.

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O. Mr. C. Wason, *June 22*, 1372.

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Q. Mr. H. Samuel; *A.* Mr. A. Douglas, *June 6, 851.*

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Os. Mr. Caldwell, *June 22, 1378, 1379; Mr. S. Dickson, 1384, 1389.*

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National School Teachers, Refusal of, to Honour Toast of King's Health, alleged.

Os. Lord Oranmore and Browne, *June 5, 624-626; Marquess of Londonderry, 626-628.*

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Rt. Hon. Sir E. H. Carson.

Solicitor-General for Ireland

Mr. J. H. M. Campbell.

Solicitor-General for Scotland

Mr. E. T. Salvesen.

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Qs. Mr. Whitley; *As.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, *June 20, 1102; June 21, 1212-1214; June 22, 1338.*

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Qs. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, *June 20, 1103; Mr. Tennant, 1103; A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1108.

Qs. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Churchill, Sir C. Dilke; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 21, 1218-1221.*

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Qs. Mr. Lough; *As.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, June 22, 1333, 1334.

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Qs. Mr. Lloyd-George; *As.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, June 20, 1109.

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Qs. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Blake, Sir J. Woodhouse; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 20, 1107-1109.

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Q. Mr. Jno. O'Connor; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 22, 1348.

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Os. Major Seely, June 21, 1323, Mr. Whitley, Sir A. Acland-Hood, Mr. Markham, 1324.

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Q. Mr. Lloyd-George; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 20, 1105.

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Qs. Mr. Lough; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 20, 1112, 1113.

Qs. Mr. Lough, Mr. Labouchere; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 21, 1215-1217.

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Qs. Mr. MacVeagh, Mr. Pirie, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Markham; *As.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, June 22, 1336.

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Qs. Mr. MacVeagh, Mr. Pirie; *As.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, June 22, 1337, 1338.

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Q. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, June 20, 1105, 1106.

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Qs. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman; *As.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 20, 1103-1105.

Q. Mr. J. Morley; *A.* Mr. Arnold-Forster, June 20, 1106, 1107.

Q. Mr. G. Bowles; *A.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 20, 1108.

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Qs. Mr. Whitley, Mr. Lloyd
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